

CHAPTER 2.0 ALTERNATIVES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes and compares the alternatives considered for the Travel Management Planning Project. It provides a discussion of the alternative development process, including public involvement and the identification of issues. It describes each alternative considered in detail, as well as the alternatives eliminated from study. It also includes Project Design Features, which are actions to minimize or avoid impacts associated with motorized/mechanical transport use. These will be carried out during implementation of the Travel Management Planning Project.

Chapter 2 is intended to present the alternatives in comparative form, to provide a clear basis of choice for the Responsible Official and the public. Evaluation of these alternatives includes a comparison of activities and an assessment of effects based on identified issues.

The information used to compare alternatives in Section 2.6 of this chapter is summarized from Chapter 3, “Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences.” Chapter 3 contains the analyses of the physical, biological, social, and economic effects of implementing each of the alternatives. For a full understanding of the effects, and how the alternatives meet the Project’s Purpose and Need, readers will need to consult Chapter 3.

2.2 ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT AND DESCRIPTIONS

This FEIS analyzes the physical, biological, social, and economic effects of the proposed changes to the designated system of roads, trails, and areas open to summer motorized/mechanical transport and nonmotorized recreation, and the areas for over-snow vehicle recreation on the Bitterroot National Forest. In this document, “summer” also includes the seasons of spring and fall.

Four alternatives, each addressing summer and over-snow motorized/mechanical transport use, were considered in detail in this FEIS: **Alternative 1**, **Alternative 2** (No Action), **Alternative 3** (Motorized emphasis), and **Alternative 4** (Nonmotorized emphasis). **Alternative 1**, which was developed as the Proposed Action, was based on the “minimization criteria” contained in 36 CFR Section §212.55 of the Final Rule. **Alternatives 3 and 4** were developed based on the significant issues identified from public comments received in response to scoping of the Proposed Action, and internal interdisciplinary team (ID Team) discussion. **Alternative 2** is required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) 40 CFR §1502.14(d). It represents the existing condition, and provides a baseline against which the effects of implementing the “action” alternatives are compared.

The alternatives contain different combinations of routes, types of uses, and seasons of use for motorized/mechanical transport, and represent a range of analysis options for consideration by the Responsible Official as required by the NEPA regulations (40 CFR §1502.14). Additionally, a number of alternatives brought up in public comments in response to scoping and on the DEIS were considered but eliminated from detailed study. These are addressed in Section 2.5 of this chapter.

Changes were made to **Alternatives 1, 3, and 4** for the FEIS, based on public comments received on the DEIS, and internal Forest Service review.

2.2.1 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Forest held numerous public meetings throughout the Bitterroot Valley to revise the 1987 Forest Plan. Community groups comprised of people with diverse viewpoints gathered in 2004 and 2005 to see if they could reach consensus on issues related to revision of the Forest Plan. The groups involved in this process

spent considerable time discussing travel management issues {Project File folder “public_involvement_pre-nepa_2005-09_2007,” Project File document PUBLIC-031.pdf}, and some groups agreed on ideas primarily related to management of roadless areas. Although a new Forest Plan was not finalized, ideas that received support from diverse interests involved in the forest planning discussions were incorporated into **Alternative 1**.

A. Fall 2006

Forest personnel attended a number of meetings with various user groups to gather input on recreational use on the Bitterroot National Forest, listen to their ideas related to motorized and nonmotorized recreation, and discuss the process for travel management.

- Ø Ravalli County Off-Road Users Association; Selway-Pintler Chapter Backcountry Horsemen; National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council; Coalition of Quiet Users including Friends of the Bitterroot, Wildlands CPR, Sierra Club, Montana Wilderness Association, and Bitterroot Backcountry Horsemen; Ravalli County Fish and Wildlife Association; and the Bitterroot Ridge Runners {Project File folder ‘public_involvement_pre-nepa_2005-09_2007,’ Project File documents PUBLIC-001, 004, 005, 021, 024, 032, 042, and 045.pdf}
- Ø Meetings were also held with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, the Ravalli County Commissioners, and elected state officials. Additionally, communication was initiated with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai and Nez Perce Tribes. {Project File folder ‘public_involvement_pre-nepa_2005-09_2007,’ Project File documents PUBLIC-006.pdf} and Project File folder ‘agency_tribal_coordination,’ Project File documents AGENCY-003, 004, 007, 009, 012, and 015.pdf}.

B. Summer 2007

On July 20, 2007 the Bitterroot National Forest’s Travel Management Planning Project was included on the Bitterroot National Forest’s Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA), which was mailed to individuals, organizations, State agencies, and others interested in management activities on the Forest {Project File folder ‘schedule_proposed_actions,’ Project File document SOPA-001.pdf}. The Travel Management Planning Project has been included on all subsequent SOPAs, which are published quarterly {Project File documents SOPA-002 to 031.pdf}, and are also available on the internet through the Forest’s website, (www.fs.fed.us/r1/bitterroot/planning).

C. Fall 2007

After consideration of public input and initial field reviews by the members of the ID Team, a proposed action (*A Starting Point*) was developed, and a scoping letter describing the project and how to comment was mailed to approximately 800 individuals, organizations, business, Federal and State agencies, Indian tribes, elected officials, and others on September 24, 2007 {Project File folder ‘public_involvement_scoping_09_2007-08_2009,’ Project File document, SCOPING-004.pdf}. A 60 day comment period was provided. A news release was sent to the local media on September 24, 2007 {Project File folder ‘news_articles_notices,’ Project File document NEWS-004.pdf}. Newspaper articles describing the Proposed Action were published in the *Missoulian* and *Ravalli Republic* on September 28, 2007 {NEWS-001 and 002.pdf}. The Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement was published in the *Federal Register* on October 1, 2007 {NEWS-005.pdf}. A letter stating that the comment period for the project would be extended an additional 60 days to January 31, 2008, in response to public request, was mailed to the public on October 22, 2007 {SCOPING-025.pdf}. A news release concerning the extension was distributed to the local media on October 22, 2007 {NEWS-003.pdf}.

D. Winter 2007

On December 27, 2007, a news release announcing public meetings to be held on the travel plan during January 2008 was sent to the local media {NEWS-006.pdf}. Public meetings were held in Darby, Hamilton, and Stevensville {NEWS-008, 009.pdf}. Additionally, resource specialists were available one day a week at the Supervisor's Office to meet with interested individuals. The comment period was extended for an additional 30 days to February 29, 2008 {NEWS-008.pdf}.

E. Fall 2008

On October 10, 2008, a letter updating the public on the status of the project was mailed to the Project's mailing list {SCOPING-050.pdf}.

F. Summer/Fall 2009

The Bitterroot National Forest's Travel Management Planning Project DEIS (DEIS) was released for public review and comment on August 5, 2009. Copies of the document, along with full-size maps, were available for review at each of the Bitterroot National Forest offices (Stevensville, Hamilton, Darby, Sula, and the West Fork). Additionally, they were on review at public libraries in Stevensville, Hamilton, Darby, and Missoula, MT. A news release announcing the availability of the DEIS and the public involvement schedule was published in the *Ravalli Republic* on August 5, 2009 {NEWS-021.pdf}. A summary of the DEIS was included as an insert in the *Ravalli Republic* on August 5, 2009 {NEWS-016.pdf}; this summary was also mailed to the Travel Management Planning Project's mailing list on August 6, 2009 {NEWS-017.pdf}. The Notice of Availability of the DEIS was published in the *Federal Register* on August 7, 2009 {NEWS-020.pdf}. The legal notice regarding the availability of the DEIS was published in the *Ravalli Republic* on August 7, 2009 {NEWS-019.pdf}. On August 11, 2009, an article which described the public involvement activities associated with the release of the DEIS was published in the *Ravalli Republic* {NEWS-024.pdf}.

On September 2, 2009, a letter extending the comment period on the DEIS for an additional 45 days to November 9, 2009 was mailed to the Travel Management Planning Project's mailing lists {Project File folder 'public_involvement_deis_08_2009-11_2009,' Project File documents DEISPI-024.pdf, 025.pdf, and 026.pdf}. On September 4, 2009, an article concerning the extension of the comment period was published in the *Ravalli Republic* {NEWS-025.pdf}. A notice extending the comment period on the DEIS to November 9, 2009 was published in the *Federal Register* on September 25, 2009 {NEWS-034.pdf}. An article regarding the extension of the comment period was published in the *Bitterroot Star* on October 7, 2009 {NEWS-036.pdf}. An article containing information regarding the extension of the comment period on the DEIS, and the open houses to be held at the Forest Supervisor's office, was published in the *Bitterroot Star* on October 14, 2009 {NEWS-035.pdf}.

Open houses regarding the DEIS were held on Hamilton, Darby, and Stevensville, MT on August 11, 13, and 18, 2009, respectively {DEISPI-019, 020, and 021.pdf}. Beginning on August 19, 2009 and ending on November 4, 2009, weekly "walk-in" sessions were held at the Forest Supervisor's office in Hamilton, MT. These sessions were staffed by members of the ID Team, and allowed members of the public to ask questions and view maps {DEISPI-030.pdf}.

On September 18, 2009, Forest personnel met with members of the Ravalli County Off Road Users Association at their request {DEISPI-036.pdf}.

G. Fall 2010

During October 2010, a letter and email containing an update on the status of the Travel Management Planning Project were sent to those who were on the mailing list for the DEIS, as well as those who submitted comments on the DEIS {Project File folder 'public_involvement_post_deis_11_2009-present,' Project File documents POSTDEIS-008, 011, 012, and 014.pdf}.

H. Winter 2011

The newly elected Ravalli County Commissioners met with the Bitterroot National Forest's Leadership Team on February 22, 2011 to receive a briefing on the status of the Travel Management Planning Project {Project File folder 'public_involvement_post_deis_11_2009-present,' Project File document POSTDEIS-045.pdf}.

I. Winter 2012

On January 6, 2012, an article regarding the 9th Circuit Court's ruling that the Gallatin National Forest's Travel Management Plan was in violation of the Montana Wilderness Study Act of 1977, with implications for the Bitterroot National Forest's Travel Management Plan Project's motorized use in the Sapphire and Blue Joint wilderness study areas, was published in the *Ravalli Republic* {Project File folder 'news_articles_notices,' Project File document NEWS-059.pdf}. A similar article was published in the *Bitterroot Star* on January 11, 2012 {NEWS-060.pdf}.

On January 26, 2012, Forest personnel met with members of the Bitterroot Quiet Users Coalition, including Wildlands CPR, Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen, Friends of the Bitterroot, Montana Wildlands Association, and the Sierra Club, at their request {POSTDEDIS-037.pdf}.

On February 23, 2012, several members of the Bitterroot National Forest's Leadership Team were invited to the Ravalli County Commissioners meeting to provide an update regarding the travel management planning project {Project File document POSTDEIS-046.pdf}.

2.2.2 ISSUES

Issues are integral to the NEPA process. The members of the ID Team reviewed all comments received in response to the Proposed Action, as well as those received in response to the DEIS, to identify issues specific to the Travel Management Planning Project. The comments were characterized as containing either "significant" or "non-significant" issues. Additionally, issues were generated by internal discussion amongst the resource specialists on the ID Team and other Forest Service personnel. "Significant" issues were used to formulate alternatives to the Proposed Action, which are addressed in the analyses in Chapter 3. They were also used to analyze environmental effects and to develop project design features.

The procedure used to identify issues, and the resolution of the comments, is described in the Issue Identification\Development Process Paper, which is located in the Project File {Project File folder 'issues,' Project File document ISSUE-002.pdf}.

The Council on Environmental Quality regulations specifies that analysis focus on significant issues. Each significant issue has one or more "indicators," which are measures of change, either quantitative or qualitative, used to compare alternatives and the effects of actions on the issues.

Issues determined not to be significant or which were covered by prior environmental review are discussed only briefly (40 CFR §1500.1(b), §1500.2(b), §1500.4(g), §1501.7(3), and §1502.2(b)).

The issues pertaining to summer motorized/mechanical transport and nonmotorized recreation are displayed in Table 2-1, along with a description of how they were addressed in the FEIS and their measurement indicator(s). Those issues identified as not pertaining to summer motorized/mechanical transport use and nonmotorized recreation is displayed in Table 2-2.

The issues pertaining to over-snow vehicle use are displayed in Table 2-3, along with a description of how they were addressed in the FEIS and their measurement indicator(s). Those issues identified as not pertaining to over-snow vehicle use are displayed in Table 2-4.

Table 2- 1: Issues Pertaining to Summer Motorized/Mechanical Transport

Issue	How Addressed
Motorized/mechanical transport use on roads and trails in inventoried roadless areas (IRAs) impacts their roadless characteristics	<p>Incorporated into Alternatives 1, 3 and 4</p> <p>Effects analyzed in Chapter 3</p> <p>Measurement Indicators: Miles of motorized routes in IRAs</p> <p>Effects to roadless area characteristics</p>
Motorized/mechanical transport use on roads and trails in Montana Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) impacts their wilderness attributes	<p>Incorporated into Alternatives 1, 3 and 4</p> <p>Effects analyzed in Chapter 3</p> <p>Measurement Indicators: Miles of motorized routes in WSAs</p> <p>Effects to wilderness attributes</p>
Motorized/mechanical transport use on roads and trails in areas recommended for wilderness designation (RWAs) in the Forest Plan impacts their wilderness attributes	<p>Incorporated into Alternatives 1, 3, and 4</p> <p>Effects analyzed in Chapter 3</p> <p>Measurement Indicators: Miles of motorized routes in RWAs</p> <p>Effects to wilderness attributes</p>
The designation of motorized routes affects motorized and nonmotorized recreation opportunities by altering the amount, type, and season of motorized and nonmotorized routes	<p>Incorporated into Alternatives 1, 3, and 4</p> <p>Effects analyzed in Chapter 3</p> <p>Measurement Indicators: Miles of motorized routes by vehicle type and season of use</p> <p>Miles of nonmotorized routes (does not include the Selway-Bitterroot, Frank Church and Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness Areas)</p> <p>Acres of Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS), by setting</p> <p>Miles of motorized routes within each ROS by Management Area</p>
Designation of motorized routes impacts water resources, fish and aquatic habitat, soils, wildlife, and invasive plants	<p>Incorporated into Alternatives 1, 3, and 4</p> <p>Incorporated into Project Design Features</p> <p>Effects analyzed in Chapter 3</p> <p>Measurement Indicators: Total Potential Motorized Sediment –</p>

Issue	How Addressed
	<p>Percent of Background (Water Resources)</p> <p>Miles of open roads and motorized trails within 100 feet of perennial streams (Fish and Aquatic Habitat)</p> <p>Miles of open roads and motorized trails within 300 feet of perennial streams (Fish and Aquatic Habitat)</p> <p>Miles of new construction of motorized routes (Soils)</p> <p>Number of new motorized routes for use by highway-legal vehicles (Soils)</p> <p>Number of new motorized routes open seasonally for vehicles 50 inches or less in width (Soils)</p> <p>Acres of lost soil productivity associated with new motorized routes (Soils)</p> <p>Miles of motorized routes on high erosion-potential soils (Soils)</p> <p>Percentage/acres of herd units greater than 250 acres and more than 1/2 mile from a designated open route during rifle season by hunting district for elk security Elk Security Area (Wildlife)</p> <p>Percentage of area/acres more than 1/2 mile from a designated open route during bow season by hunting district for elk security Elk Security Area Index (Wildlife)</p> <p>Percentage/acres of area in wildlife core security area (Wildlife)</p>
<p>Motorized wheeled access for dispersed camping impacts soils, rare plants, and invasive plants</p>	<p>The number of trails proposed to be designated as open to motorcycles and motorized vehicles 50 inches or less in width which are impacted by invasive plants (Invasive Plants)</p> <p>Miles of roads currently closed that are proposed to be opened (Invasive Plants)</p>

Issue	How Addressed
	<p>Incorporated into Alternatives 1, 3, and 4</p> <p>Incorporated into Project Design Features</p> <p>Effects analyzed in Chapter 3</p> <p>Measurement Indicators:</p> <p>Acres of sensitive soils located within motorized wheeled access corridors for dispersed camping (Soils)</p> <p>Number of motorized routes with rare plant species occurrences (Rare Plants)</p> <p>Acres of invasive plants infestations within motorized wheeled access corridors for dispersed camping (Invasive Plants)</p>

In addition, analysis was conducted on several other resources to determine if there were effects associated with the Travel Management Planning Project. These resources were Transportation, Recreation and Trails, Economic and Social, Mineral Materials, and Cultural Resources.

The following issues were identified as not pertaining to summer motorized/mechanical transport use:

Table 2- 2: Issues Not Pertaining to Summer Motorized/Mechanical Transport

Issues	Rationale
Air Quality	The Forest Service acknowledges that odors from internal-combustion engines can diminish a nonmotorized recreation user's experience. However, this is a recreation (user satisfaction) issue rather than a general air quality issue. Air quality is not significantly affected by motorized use of the Forest's roads, trails, and areas.
Noise	The State of Montana has authority to regulate noise associated with motorcycles and ATVs on public ways, which includes National Forest System roads and trails, according to Montana State Codes 61 9 418 and 23 2 644.
Vegetation	The Travel Management Planning Project does not propose vegetation treatment (timber harvest, thinning, and prescribed burning) in any alternative. There would be no effects to the vegetation resource as there would be no vegetation removal or alteration.
Fire/Fuels	Under all alternatives, administrative use on all roads and trails closed to public motorized use would be permitted, except in Designated Wilderness areas. Programmatic direction would allow for road and trail access for fire suppression and fuel management projects.

Issues	Rationale
Range	Existing grazing permits would not be affected by any alternative. Permittees would continue to have access on closed roads for permit administration purposes.
Visuals	No activities associated with the Travel Management Planning Project would impact the visual resource as there would be no vegetation removal or alteration, or land disturbance associated with road and trail construction. Consequently, there would be no change in visual quality objectives.

Table 2- 3: Issues Pertaining to Over-Snow Vehicle Use

Issues	How Addressed
Designating acres open to over-snow vehicle use impacts recreational experiences.	<p>Incorporated into Alternatives 1, 3, and 4</p> <p>Effects analyzed in Chapter 3</p> <p>Measurement Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total acres open to over-snow vehicle use Acres of inventoried roadless areas (IRAs) open to over-snow vehicle use Acres of wilderness study areas (WSAs) open to over-snow vehicle use Acres of recommended wilderness areas (RWAs) open to over-snow vehicle use Effects to Roadless Characteristics and Wilderness attributes
Designating areas open to over-snow vehicle use affects wintering wildlife	<p>Incorporated into Alternatives 1 and 4</p> <p>Effects analyzed in Chapter 3</p> <p>Measurement Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage/acres of the Forest open to over-snow vehicle use Percentage/acres of mountain goat winter range open to over-snow vehicle use Percentage/acres of elk winter range open to over-snow vehicle use

In addition, analysis was conducted on several other resources to determine if there were effects associated with the Travel Management Planning Project. These resources were Transportation, Recreation and Trails, Economics and Social, Mineral Materials, and Cultural Resources.

The following issues were identified as not pertaining to over-snow motorized recreation:

Table 2- 4: Issues Not Pertaining to Over-Snow Motorized Recreation

Issues	Rationale
Air Quality	The Forest Service acknowledges that odors from internal-combustion engines can diminish a nonmotorized user's experience. However, this is a recreation (user satisfaction) issue rather than a general air quality issue. Air quality is not significantly affected by motorized use of the Forest's roads, trails, and areas.
Noise	The State of Montana has authority to regulate noise associated with over-snow vehicles, including those operating on National Forest System land.
Vegetation	The Travel Management Planning Project does not propose vegetation treatment (timber harvest, thinning, and prescribed burning) in any alternative. There would be no effects to the vegetation resource.
Visuals	No activities associated with the Travel Management Planning Project would impact the visual resource as there would be no vegetation removal or alteration, or land disturbance associated with trail construction. Consequently, there would be no change in visual quality objectives.

2.2.3 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED IN DETAIL ~ DEVELOPMENT AND DESCRIPTION

The ID Team analyzed four alternatives in detail in this FEIS: **Alternative 1**, **Alternative 2** (No Action), **Alternative 3** (Motorized emphasis), and **Alternative 4** (Nonmotorized emphasis). In the Travel Management Planning Project DEIS, **Alternative 1** was referred to as "Revised," this was to indicate that it had changed as presented during scoping (*A Starting Point*). This designation has been dropped from the FEIS as most of the alternatives, with the exception of **Alternative 2**, have changed from the DEIS. For additional information, please refer to the section titled Changes Between DEIS and FEIS at the end of this chapter.

The alternatives address summer motorized/mechanical transport and nonmotorized use, and over-snow motorized use. **Alternatives 1, 3, and 4** respond to the significant issues identified during scoping; changes were made based on comments received on the DEIS and internal Forest Service review.

Information included in the text, tables, and maps is based on the best available information; corrections and adjustments will occur during project implementation.

All numbers are approximations.

2.2.4 COMMON TO ALL ACTION ALTERNATIVES (SUMMER)

The following were incorporated into each of the action alternatives:

- Ø Motorized equipment and mechanical transport would not be allowed in Designated Wilderness
- Ø Unauthorized routes which were created prior to the 2001 Tri-State Decision would no longer be open to motorized use unless designated on the motor vehicle use map (MVUM)
- Ø There would be no routes designated for the exclusive use of utility vehicles (UTVs)
- Ø Utility vehicles greater than 50 inches in width would be allowed on National Forest System roads open to full size vehicles
- Ø Utility vehicles less than 50 inches in width would be allowed on National Forest System double-track trails

- Ø No game retrieval off designated routes using motorized means
- Ø Motorized wheeled access for dispersed camping would be allowed in “corridors” off both sides of the center line of designated roads and trails where resource conditions would permit such use without causing unacceptable levels of damage. The width of the corridor will vary by alternative.
- Ø Corridors for motorized wheeled access for dispersed camping would be extended to those sites identified on the maps of the alternatives
- Ø Motorized wheeled access between dispersed campsites would be prohibited
- Ø Motorized wheeled access for dispersed camping would be prohibited within 30 feet of any flowing stream, pond, lake, marsh, or wetland. Camping adjacent to water sources would be permitted; however, access would be by nonmotorized means
- Ø Access to dispersed campsites outside the designated corridors would be accessible only by nonmotorized means
- Ø Parking of motorized vehicles off of designated routes would be limited to 30 feet from the edge of the route surface
- Ø Off-road travel for purposes other than dispersed camping would be limited to parking immediately adjacent to the designated route
- Ø There would be no opportunities for high-challenge motorized opportunities (hill climbs, mud bogs, play areas, and motor parks)
- Ø A project-specific Forest Plan amendment would be made to Wildlife and Fish forest-wide management standard (14) pertaining to elk habitat effectiveness
- Ø Roads and trails closed to public motorized use would remain available to Forest Service personnel for administrative purposes including wildfire suppression, search and rescue, medical emergencies, permit administration, data collection, invasive plants treatments, general management, and other activities

2.2.5 COMMON TO ALL ACTION ALTERNATIVES (OVER-SNOW)

The following was incorporated into each of the action alternatives:

- Ø Snowmobile use in Designated Wilderness would not be allowed

2.2.6 ALTERNATIVE 1 (SUMMER)

Alternative 1 was described as the Proposed Action in the scoping document (*A Starting Point*) released for public review and comment in September 2007 {Project File documents SCOPING-003.pdf to 009.pdf}. Based on feedback received from the public, additional information gathered by resource specialists during field reviews, and internal ID Team discussion, a number of changes were made to the Proposed Action as it was initially described. Consequently, the Responsible Official decided to revise the Proposed Action as presented in the DEIS, and include the “original” Proposed Action as an Alternative Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Study, in Section 2.5 of this chapter.

Based on public comments received in response to the DEIS, and internal Forest Service review, a number of changes were made to **Alternative 1** as described in this FEIS. Many were applicable to specific roads, trails, and areas mentioned in comments. Others were made in response to comments pertaining to motorized trails leading to Designated Wilderness areas, motorized use in wilderness study areas, and effects of motorized use on roads and trails on water quality and fisheries

The criteria utilized in **Alternative 1** were the same as those considered in the DEIS, as listed below, with the exception that the use of motorized/mechanical transport in recommended wilderness areas would be

prohibited, was added for clarification. The following are in addition to the Features Common to All Action Alternatives described in Section 2.2.4:

- Ø Exclude motorized use on some routes in wilderness study areas (WSAs) and inventoried roadless areas (IRAs)
- Ø No motorized/mechanical transport use allowed on routes in recommended wilderness areas (RWAs)
- Ø Bicycles would be permitted on all other roads and trails, including those closed yearlong or seasonally to motorized use
- Ø Designate routes that scored high for recreation opportunity during the route screening process, but were not opened in the “original” Proposed Action, as open
- Ø Designate routes determined to have low recreation value: no loop, “short time in the saddle,” and no destination as closed
- Ø Allow motorized wheeled access for dispersed camping up to 300 feet from a designated route
- Ø Allow motorized wheeled access to identified (mapped) dispersed campsites greater than 300 feet from a designated route
- Ø Develop loops/connectors for trails open to vehicles 50 inches or less in width
- Ø Open closed roads if they provide a recreational opportunity and have low resource concerns
- Ø Change implementation dates for seasonal closures to reduce uses conflicts in regards to rifle versus bow season

Table 2-5 shows the changes in the miles of motorized routes for **Alternative 1**, compared to the existing condition (**Alternative 2**).

Table 2- 5: Alternative 1. Proposed Changes (Summer)

Route Status	Miles
Roads open to highway legal vehicles - yearlong	-41 ¹
Roads open to highway legal vehicles – seasonally ²	-9
Proposed roads open to highway legal vehicles – yearlong ³	0.4
Trails ⁴ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – yearlong	-74
Trails ⁴ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – seasonally	9
Proposed trails ⁵ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – seasonally	10
Trails open to motorcycles - yearlong	-246
Trails open to motorcycles – seasonally ⁶	43
Change in total miles open to motorized use	-308

¹ (-) indicates decrease

² Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Transportation analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.1.3 C

³ This is a connector between two existing roads which will require separate NEPA analysis and decision. It will be shown on the FEIS map, but will not be included on the MVUM until separate analysis is completed and the decision is signed

⁴ Most of these trails open yearlong and seasonally, are roads closed to full size vehicles but open to ATVs and motorcycles; these are known as “coincident routes.” Please refer to the FEIS, Chapter 3, Sections 3.1 (Transportation) and 3.2 (Recreation and Trails) for additional information. Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Recreation and Trails analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3 H

⁵ These include connectors and a new trail, both of which will require separate NEPA analyses and decisions. These will be shown on the FEIS map, but will not be included on the MVUM until analyses are completed and the decisions are signed

⁶ Descriptions of season of use are provided in the Recreation and Trails analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3 H

The proposed changes include 30 miles of unauthorized routes (19 miles for vehicles 50 inches or less in width, 11 miles for motorcycles) to be designated on the MVUM.

Table 2-6 shows the total number of miles of motorized routes for **Alternative 1**:

Table 2- 6: Alternative 1. Route Status and Number of Miles (Summer)

Route Status	Miles
Roads open to all vehicles ¹ - yearlong	10
Roads open to all vehicles – seasonally ²	67 ³
Roads open to highway legal vehicles - yearlong	846
Roads open to highway legal vehicles – seasonally ²	560 ³
Proposed roads open to highway legal vehicles – yearlong ⁴	0.4
Trails ⁵ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – yearlong	36
Trails ⁵ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – seasonally	559
Proposed trails ⁶ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – seasonally	10
Trails open to motorcycles - yearlong	84
Trails open to motorcycles – seasonally ⁷	121
Total miles open to motorized use	2,293

¹ Includes highway-legal vehicles and unlicensed ATVs and motorcycles

² Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Transportation analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.1.3 C

³ Reflects a recent law in Idaho which required a change in the MVUM for Road #468 (Nez Perce Trail) from “Open to Highway Legal Vehicles- Seasonally” (MVUM 4) to “Open to All Vehicles – Seasonally” (MVUM 2). This change was independent of the Travel Management Planning Project. For additional information, please refer to {Project File folder “transportation,” Project File document TRANS-006.pdf}.

⁴ This is a connector between two existing roads which will require separate NEPA analysis and decision. It will be shown on the FEIS map, but will not be included on the MVUM until the analysis is completed and decision is signed

⁵ Most of these trails open yearlong and seasonally, are roads closed to full size vehicles but open to ATV and motorcycles; these are known as “coincident routes.” Please refer to the FEIS, Chapter 3, Sections 3.1 (Transportation) and 3.2 (Recreation and Trails) for additional information. Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Recreation and Trails analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3 H

⁶ These include connectors and a new trail, both of which will require separate NEPA analyses and decisions. These will be shown on the FEIS map, but will not be included on the MVUM until the analyses are completed and the decisions are signed

⁷ Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Recreation and Trails analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3 H

For maps of Alternative 1 please refer to the CD that is attached to the inside cover of this document.

2.2.7 ALTERNATIVE 1 (OVER-SNOW)

Alternative 1 was described as the Proposed Action in the scoping document (*A Starting Point*) released for public review in September 2007 {Project File document SCOPING-003.pdf to 009.pdf}. Based on the feedback received from the public and internal ID Team discussion, a number of changes were made to the Proposed Action as it was initially described. Consequently, the Responsible Official decided to revise the Proposed Action and include the “original” Proposed Action as an Alternative Considered But Eliminated from Detailed Study, in Section 2.5 of this chapter.

Based on public comments received in response to the DEIS, and internal Forest Service review, changes were made to **Alternative 1** as described in this FEIS, primarily related to use in the Sapphire and Blue Joint Wilderness Study Areas. Snowmobiles and other over-snow vehicles would be restricted to those areas where they were being used in 1977, when the Montana Wilderness Study Act was signed into law.

The criteria utilized in **Alternative 1** were the same as those considered in the DEIS, as listed below, with the exception for excluding use in portions of wilderness study areas and inventoried roadless areas. The following are in addition to the Features Common to All Action Alternatives described in Section 2.2.4:

- Ø Exclude motorized use in portions of wilderness study areas (WSAs) and inventoried roadless areas (IRAs), which are located within recommended wilderness areas.
- Ø No motorized/mechanical transport use allowed in recommended wilderness areas (RWAs)
- Ø No motorized use in identified mountain goat closure areas

Table 2-7 shows the change in acres of areas associated with **Alternative 1** compared to the existing condition (**Alternative 2**):

Table 2- 7: Alternative 1. Proposed Changes (Over-Snow)

Area Status	Acres
Acres open to over-snow vehicle use – no restrictions	-177,292 ¹
Acres open to over-snow vehicle use - seasonally	-7,241
Change in acres open to motorized use	-184,533

¹ (-) indicates decrease

Table 2-8 shows the total acres of areas open for over-snow motorized use with **Alternative 1**:

Table 2- 8: Alternative 1. Acres Open to Over-Snow Use

Area Status	Acres
Acres open to over-snow vehicle use – no restrictions	522,592
Acres open to over-snow vehicle use - seasonally	41,856
Total acres open to motorized use	564,448

For a map of Alternative 1 please refer to the CD that is attached to the inside cover of this document.

2.2.8 ALTERNATIVE 2 - NO ACTION (SUMMER)

The No Action alternative is required under NEPA regulations (40 CFR §1502.14(d)). It represents the existing condition, and provides a baseline against which the effects of implementing the “action” alternatives are compared.

Alternative 2 would defer implementation of the 2005 Travel Management Rule, and would not result in the publication of a MVUM. It is represented by the current (2005) Bitterroot National Forest travel plan map and supporting prohibitions. Permissible motorized uses include those roads, trails, and areas not otherwise prohibited, including use of an undetermined number of unauthorized routes which were created prior to the 2001 Tri-State Decision. Under **Alternative 2**, motorized wheeled access for dispersed camping would continue to be permitted in accordance with the 2001 Tri-State Decision (USDI/USDA Forest Service 2001b).

Bicycles would be permitted on all roads and trails, including those closed to motorized use, and those located in recommended wilderness areas.

Table 2-9 shows the status of motorized routes and the number of miles for **Alternative 2**:

Table 2- 9: Alternative 2. Route Status and Number of Miles (Summer)

Route Status	Miles
Roads open to all vehicles ¹ - yearlong	10
Roads open to all vehicles –seasonally ²	67 ³
Roads open to highway legal vehicles - yearlong	887
Roads open to highway legal vehicles – seasonally ²	569 ³
Trails ⁴ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – yearlong	110
Trails ⁴ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – seasonally	550
Trails open to motorcycles - yearlong	330
Trails open to motorcycles – seasonally ⁵	78

Route Status	Miles
Total miles open to motorized use	2,601

¹ Includes highway-legal vehicles and unlicensed ATVs and motorcycles

² Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Transportation analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.1.3 C

³ Reflects a recent law in Idaho which required a change in the MVUM for Road #468 (Nez Perce Trail) from “Open to Highway Legal Vehicles-Seasonally” (MVUM 4) to “Open to All Vehicles – Seasonally” (MVUM 2). This change was independent of the Travel Management Planning Project. For additional information, please refer to {Project File folder ‘transportation,’ Project File document TRANS-006.pdf}.

⁴ Most of these trails open yearlong and seasonally, are roads closed to full size vehicles but open to ATVs and motorcycles; these are known as “coincident routes.” Please refer to the FEIS, Chapter 3, Sections 3.1 (Transportation) and 3.2 (Recreation and Trails) for additional information. Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Recreation and Trails analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3 H

⁵ Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Recreation and Trails analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3 H

For maps of Alternative 2 please refer to the CD that is attached to the inside cover of this document.

2.2.9 ALTERNATIVE 2 –NO ACTION (OVER-SNOW)

The No Action alternative for over-snow motorized recreation would continue existing management direction; none of the changes described in **Alternative 1** would be implemented. Existing prohibitions of snowmobiling use would continue.

Table 2-10 shows the total acres of areas open to for over-snow motorized use with **Alternative 2**:

Table 2- 10: Alternative 2. Acres Open to Over-Snow Use

Area Status	Acres
Acres open to over-snow vehicles – no restrictions	699,884
Acres open to over-snow vehicles-seasonally	49,097
Total acres open to motorized use	748,981

For a map of Alternative 2 please refer to the CD that is attached to the inside cover of this document.

2.2.10 ALTERNATIVE 3 - MOTORIZED EMPHASIS (SUMMER)

Alternative 3 was developed to respond to public comments on the “original” Proposed Action that the designation of specific motorized routes may affect motorized opportunities by altering the amount, type, and season of motorized use. Concern was expressed by motorized recreationists that motorized access was being restricted, and that there was a need for additional motorized opportunities.

Based on public comments received in response to the DEIS, and internal Forest Service review, a number of changes were made to **Alternative 3** in this FEIS. Many of these were applicable to specific roads, trails, and areas mentioned in comments. Others were made in response to comments pertaining to closing motorized trails leading to Designated Wilderness areas, and prohibition of mechanical transport in recommended wilderness.

The criteria utilized in the development of **Alternative 3** were the same as those considered in the DEIS, as listed below, with the exception for allowing motorized/mechanical transport in the Selway-Bitterroot and Blue Joint recommended wilderness areas.

The following are in addition to the Features Common to All Action Alternatives described in Section 2.2.4:

- Ø Increase motorized use on routes in wilderness study areas (WSAs) and inventoried roadless areas (IRAs)

- Ø Motorized/mechanical transport use allowed in recommended wilderness areas
- Ø Bicycles would be permitted on all roads and trails, including those closed yearlong or seasonally to motorized use
- Ø Designate routes that scored high for recreation opportunity during the route screening process, but were not opened in the “original” Proposed Action as open
- Ø Designate routes with low recreation value: no loop, “short time in the saddle”, and no destination as closed
- Ø Allow motorized wheeled access for dispersed camping up to 300 feet from a designated route
- Ø Allow motorized wheeled access to identified (mapped) dispersed campsites greater than 300 feet from a route.
- Ø Develop loops/connectors for trails open to vehicles 50 inches or less in width
- Ø Open closed roads if they provide a recreational opportunity and low resource concerns
- Ø Change implementation dates for seasonal closures to reduce uses conflicts in regards to rifle versus bow season

Table 2-11 shows the changes in the miles of motorized routes for **Alternative 3** compared to the existing condition (**Alternative 2**):

Table 2- 11: Alternative 3. Proposed Changes (Summer)

Route Status	Miles
Roads open to highway legal vehicles - yearlong	-14 ¹
Roads open to highway legal vehicles – seasonally ²	8
Proposed roads open to highway legal vehicles – yearlong ³	0.4
Trails ⁴ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – yearlong	-38
Trails ⁴ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – seasonally	47
Proposed trails ⁵ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – seasonally	10
Trails open to motorcycles - yearlong	-40
Trails open to motorcycles – seasonally ⁶	109
Change in total miles open to motorized use	82

¹ (-) indicates decrease

² Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Transportation analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.1.3 C

³ This is a connector between two existing roads which will require separate NEPA analysis and decision. It will be shown on the FEIS map, but will not be included on the MVUM until the analysis is complete

⁴ Most of these trails open yearlong and seasonally, are roads closed to full size vehicles, but open to ATVs and motorcycles; these are known as “coincident routes.” Please refer to the FEIS, Chapter 3, Sections 3.1 (Transportation) and 3.2

(Recreation and Trails) for additional information. Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Recreation and Trails analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3 H

⁵ These include connectors and a new trail, both of which will require separate NEPA analyses and decisions. These will be shown on the FEIS map, but will not be included on the MVUM until the analyses are completed and the decisions are signed

⁶ Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Recreation and Trails analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3 H

The proposed changes include 35 miles of unauthorized routes (20 miles for vehicles 50 inches or less in width, 15 miles for motorcycles) to be designated on the MVUM.

Table 2-12 shows the total number of miles of motorized routes for **Alternative 3**:

Table 2- 12: Alternative 3. Route Status and Number of Miles (Summer)

Route Status	Miles
Roads open to all vehicles ¹ - yearlong	10
Roads open to all vehicles – seasonally ²	67 ³
Roads open to highway legal vehicles - yearlong	873
Roads open to highway legal vehicles – seasonally ²	577 ³
Proposed roads open to highway legal vehicles – yearlong ⁴	0.4
Trails ⁵ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – yearlong	72
Trails ⁵ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – seasonally	597
Proposed trails ⁶ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – seasonally	10
Trails open to motorcycles - yearlong	290
Trails open to motorcycles – seasonally ⁷	187
Total miles open to motorized use	2,683

¹ Includes highway-legal vehicles and unlicensed ATVs and motorcycles

² Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Transportation analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.1.3 C

³ Reflects a recent law in Idaho which required a change in the MVUM for Road #468 (Nez Perce Trail) from “Open to Highway Legal Vehicles- Seasonally” (MVUM 4) to “Open to All Vehicles – Seasonally” (MVUM 2) This change was independent of the Travel Management Planning Project. For additional information, please refer to {Project File ‘transportation,’ Project File document TRANS- 006.pdf}.

⁴ This is a connector between two existing roads which will require separate NEPA analysis and decision. It will be shown on the FEIS map, but will not be included on the MVUM until the analysis is complete

⁵ Most of these trails open yearlong and seasonally, are roads closed to full size vehicles, but open to ATVs and motorcycles; these are known as “coincident routes.” Please refer to the FEIS, Chapter 3, Sections 3.1 (Transportation) and 3.2 (Recreation and Trails) for additional information. Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Recreation and Trails analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3 H

⁶ These include connectors and a new trail, both of which will require separate NEPA analyses and decisions. These will be shown on the FEIS map, but will not be included on the MVUM until the analyses are completed and the decisions are signed

⁷ Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Recreation and Trails analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3 H

For maps of Alternative 3 please refer to the CD that is attached to the inside cover of this document.

2.2.11 ALTERNATIVE 3 –MOTORIZED EMPHASIS (OVER-SNOW)

Alternative 3 was developed to respond to public comments on the “original” Proposed Action that the designation of specific motorized routes may affect motorized and nonmotorized recreation opportunities by altering the amount, type, and season of motorized and nonmotorized routes. Concern was expressed by motorized recreationists that motorized access was being restricted, and that there was a need for additional motorized opportunities.

The criteria utilized in the development of **Alternative 3** were the same as those considered in the DEIS, as listed below, with the exception for allowing motorized/mechanical transport use in the Selway-Bitterroot and Blue Joint recommended wilderness areas. These are in addition to the Features Common to All Action Alternatives described in Section 2.2.4.

- Ø Include motorized use in portions of wilderness study areas (WSAs) and inventoried roadless areas (IRAs).
- Ø Motorized/mechanical transport use allowed in recommended wilderness areas
- Ø Opportunities for additional motorized recreation - areas currently closed which could be opened.

Table 2-13 shows the change in acres of areas associated with **Alternative 3** compared to the existing condition (**Alternative 2**):

Table 2- 13: Alternative 3. Proposed Changes (Over-Snow)

Area Status	Acres
Acres open to over-snow vehicle use – no restrictions	4,679
Acres open to over-snow vehicle use-seasonally	0
Change in acres open to motorized use	4,679

Table 2-14 shows the total acres of areas open for over-snow motorized use with **Alternative 3**:

Table 2- 14: Alternative 3. Acres Open to Over-Snow Use

Area Status	Acres
Acres open to over-snow vehicle use – no restrictions	704,563
Acres open to over-snow vehicle use - seasonally	49,097
Total acres open to motorized use	753,660

For a map of Alternative 3 please refer to the CD that is attached to the inside cover of this document.

2.2.12 ALTERNATIVE 4 –NONMOTORIZED EMPHASIS (SUMMER)

Alternative 4 was developed to respond to public comments on the “original” Proposed Action that the designation of specific motorized routes may affect nonmotorized recreation opportunities by altering the amount, type, and season of motorized and nonmotorized routes. Concern was expressed by nonmotorized users regarding the need for additional nonmotorized opportunities. Additionally, nonmotorized users identified two other issues: motorized use on roads and trails within inventoried roadless areas impacts their roadless characteristics, and motorized use in wilderness study areas impacts their wilderness character.

Based on public comments received in response to the DEIS, and internal Forest Service review, a number of changes were made to **Alternative 4** as described in this FEIS. Many of these were applicable to specific roads, trails, and areas mentioned in comments. Others were made in response to comments including closing motorized trails leading to Designated Wilderness areas, motorized use in wilderness study areas, motorized use on coincident routes, and effects of motorized use on roads and trails on water quality and fisheries.

Some of the criteria utilized in the development of **Alternative 4** were the same as those considered in the DEIS, as listed below, with the exception that the use of motorized/mechanical transport in recommended wilderness areas would be prohibited, was added for clarification. Additionally, two other criteria: reduce motorized use in inventoried roadless areas (IRAs), and no motorized/mechanical transport use allowed on routes in wilderness study areas (WSAs) was added. These are in addition to the Feature Common to All Action Alternatives described in Section 2.2.4:

- Ø Reduce motorized use in inventoried roadless areas (IRAs)
- Ø No motorized/mechanical transport use allowed on routes in wilderness study areas (WSAs)
- Ø No motorized/mechanical transport use allowed on routes in recommended wilderness areas (RWAs)

- Ø Bicycles would be permitted on all other roads and trails, including those closed yearlong or seasonally to motorized use
- Ø Most coincident routes (roads closed to full-size vehicles but open as trails for use by ATVs and motorcycles) would be closed yearlong to motorized use
- Ø Change implementation dates for seasonal closures to reduce uses conflicts in regards to rifle versus bow season.
- Ø Close routes that scored high for resource concerns during the route screening process (steep slopes, erosion, bull-trout, elk security, sensitive plants, etc.), but were not closed in the “original” Proposed Action
- Ø Close routes with low recreation value for closure: no loop, “short time in the saddle,” no destination as identified during the route screening process
- Ø Allow motorized wheeled access for dispersed camping up to 150 feet from a designated route
- Ø Allow motorized wheeled access to identified (mapped) dispersed campsites greater than 150 feet from a route
- Ø Close routes to create large quiet blocks which could provide solitude experience.
- Ø Close routes if other access is available (parallel routes; other routes within ¼ mile)

Table 2-15 shows the changes in the miles of motorized routes for **Alternative 4** compared to the existing condition (**Alternative 2**):

Table 2- 15: Alternative 4. Proposed Changes (Summer)

Route Status	Miles
Roads open to highway legal vehicles - yearlong	-312 ¹
Roads open to highway legal vehicles – seasonally ²	-140
Proposed roads open to highway legal vehicles – yearlong ³	0.4
Trails ⁴ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – yearlong	-100
Trails ⁴ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – seasonally	-434
Trails open to motorcycles - yearlong	-324
Trails open to motorcycles – seasonally ⁵	-68
Change in total miles open to motorized use	-1,378

¹ (-) indicates decrease

² Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Transportation analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.1.3 C

³ This is a connector between two existing roads which will require separate NEPA analysis and decision. It will be shown on the FEIS map, but will not be included on the MVUM until the analysis is complete

⁴ Most of these trails open yearlong and seasonally, are roads closed to full size vehicles, but open to ATVs and motorcycles; these are known as “coincident routes.” Please refer to the FEIS, Chapter 3, Sections 3.1 (Transportation) and 3.2 (Recreation and Trails) for additional information. Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Recreation and Trails analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3 H

⁵ Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Recreation and Trails analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3 H

The proposed changes include 3 miles of unauthorized routes (for vehicles 50 inches or less in width) to be designated on the MVUM.

Table 2-16 shows the total number of miles of motorized routes for **Alternative 4**:

Table 2- 16: Alternative 4. Route Status and Number of Miles (Summer)

Route Status	Miles
Roads open to all vehicles ¹ - yearlong	10
Roads open to all vehicles – seasonally ²	67 ³
Roads open to highway legal vehicles - yearlong	575
Roads open to highway legal vehicles – seasonally ²	429 ³
Proposed roads open to highway legal vehicles – yearlong ⁴	0.4
Trails ⁵ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – yearlong	10
Trails ⁵ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – seasonally	116
Trails open to motorcycles - yearlong	6
Trails open to motorcycles – seasonally ⁶	10
Total miles open to motorized use	1,223

¹ Includes highway-legal vehicles and unlicensed ATVs and motorcycles

² Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Transportation analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.1.3 C

³ Reflects a recent law in Idaho, which required a change in the MVUM for Road #468 (Nez Perce Trail) from “Open to Highway Legal Vehicles- Seasonally” (MVUM 4) to “Open to All Vehicles –Seasonally” (MVUM 2). This change was independent of the Travel Management Planning Project. For additional information, please refer to {Project File folder ‘transportation,’ Project File document TRANS-006.pdf}.

⁴ This is a connector between two existing roads which will require separate NEPA analysis and decision. It will be shown on the FEIS map, but will not be included on the MVUM until the analysis is complete

⁵ Most of these trails open yearlong and seasonally, are roads closed to full size vehicles, but open to ATVs and motorcycles; these are known as “coincident routes.” Please refer to the FEIS, Chapter 3, Sections 3.1 (Transportation) and 3.2 (Recreation and Trails) for additional information.

⁶ Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Recreation and Trails analysis, Chapter3, Section 3.2.3 H

For maps of Alternative 4 please refer to the CD that is attached to the inside cover of this document.

2.2.13 ALTERNATIVE 4 (OVER-SNOW)

Alternative 4 was developed to respond to public comments on the “original” Proposed Action regarding the following issues: designating areas open to motorized travel may affect recreational experiences, and designating areas open to over-snow motorized travel may affect wildlife.

Based on public comments received in response to the DEIS, and internal Forest Service review, changes were made to **Alternative 4** as described in this FEIS.

The criteria utilized in the development of **Alternative 4** were the same as those considered in the DEIS, as listed below, with the exception that use would be excluded in most inventoried roadless areas (IRAs). These are in addition to the Features Common to All Action Alternatives described in Section 2.2.4.

- Ø Exclude motorized use in WSAs and most IRAs, with the exception for most of the Tolan Creek IRA and a portion of the Stony Mountain IRA
- Ø No motorized /mechanical transport use allowed in recommended wilderness areas
- Ø No motorized use in identified mountain goat closure areas
- Ø Address resource concerns regarding wildlife including mountain goats and elk

Table 2-17 shows the change in acres of areas associated with **Alternative 4** compared to the existing condition (**Alternative 2**):

Table 2- 17: Alternative 4. Proposed Changes (Over-Snow)

Area Status	Acres
Acres open to over-snow vehicle use – no restrictions	-381,302 ¹
Acres open to over-snow vehicle use - seasonally	-7,241
Change in acres open to motorized use	-388,543

¹ (-) indicates decrease

Table 2-18 shows the total acres of areas open to over-snow motorized use with **Alternative 4:**

Table 2- 18: Alternative 4. Acres Open to Over-Snow Use

Area Status	Acres
Acres open to over-snow vehicle use – no restrictions	318,582
Acres open to over-snow vehicle use - seasonally	41,856
Total acres open to motorized use	360,438

For a map of Alternative 4 please refer to the CD that is attached to the inside cover of this document.

2.3 PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES

The ID Team incorporated the following design features to minimize or avoid impacts associated with summer and over-snow motorized/mechanical transport use. These will be carried out during implementation of the Travel Management Planning Project.

Table 2- 19: Project Design Features

Objective	Design Features
Soils	
Minimize soil disturbance and reduce soil compaction	Region 1 Soil and Water Conservation Practices applicable to Travel Management Planning (Practices 11.02, 11.03, 11.05, 11.06, 11.09, 12.10, 12.11, 15.01 through 15.14, 15.16 through 15.23, 15.27)
Minimize soil disturbance (compaction and displacement), and effects to sensitive soils associated with motorized wheeled access for dispersed camping	<p>Monitor dispersed campsites and access routes. When adverse impacts are observed, appropriate actions such as restricting or eliminating access and rehabilitating sites will occur</p> <p>Use “emergency orders” under 36 CFR §295.5 to close roads or trails for a limited duration to address immediate resource issues, or “standard orders” for longer-term or permanent closures to provide additional resource protection if best management practices (BMPs) and other conservation practices are not sufficient. Long-term or</p>

Objective	Design Features
	permanent closures would require public review and NEPA analysis.
Water Resources/ Fish and Aquatic Habitat	
<p>Minimize impacts to water quality, especially 303(d)-listed streams; achieve State water quality and assigned beneficial uses</p> <p>Minimize effects associated with motorized wheeled access for dispersed camping</p>	<p>Region 1 Soil and Water Conservation Practices applicable to Travel Management Planning (Practices 11.02, 11.03, 11.05, 11.06, 11.09, 12.10, 12.11, 15.01 through 15.14, 15.16 through 15.23, 15.27)</p> <p>Monitor dispersed campsites and access routes. When adverse impacts are observed, appropriate actions such as restricting or eliminating access and rehabilitating sites will occur</p> <p>Use seasonal closures on specific motorized routes to reduce disturbance and erosion during wet times of the year</p> <p>Use “emergency orders” under 36 CFR §295.5 to close roads or trails for a limited duration to address immediate resource issues, or “standard orders” for longer-term or permanent closures to provide additional resource protection if BMPs and other conservation practices are not sufficient. Long-term or permanent closures would require public review and NEPA analysis</p> <p>Monitor ongoing Forest use effects and implement adaptive management changes as needed (may require further public review and NEPA documentation)</p> <p>Use OHV Ranger-supported patrols and local education/outreach to local motorized user groups</p> <p>Implement timely road and trail maintenance to prevent route damage and erosion</p>
Invasive Plants	
Minimize introduction and spread of invasive plants	Continue the application of Forest Service Manual (FSM) 2080 direction for recreation management activities by

Objective	Design Features
	<p>reducing the introduction of new invaders, reducing the expansion of established infestations of existing invaders, maintaining an effective dynamic educational program, and involving citizens of all ages and interests in active invasive plant management</p> <p>Provide invasive plants identification guides and signs at recreation sites to inform the public on invasive plants</p> <p>Provide Forest Service personnel with brochures or educational material to distribute to their contacts in the field</p> <p>Provide information and education to outdoor groups and organizations, including protocols for weed-washing vehicles prior to use on the National Forest</p>
Rare Plants	
Minimize impacts to threatened, endangered, and sensitive (TES) plants	Use “emergency” and “standard” orders to close roads, trails, and dispersed campsites which are contributing to impacts to TES plants
Recreation and Trails	
Minimize conflicts between uses, teach users to prevent wildfires, reduce litter, practice trail etiquette	User-education and enforcement of travel management regulations. Sign trailheads with information on trail etiquette, fire prevention, and litter control. Partner with organizations, such as the Ravalli County Off Road User Association and Bitterroot Ridge Runners, to make presentations in local schools
Special Designated Areas	
<p>Monitor use in the Sapphire and Blue Joint Wilderness Study Areas</p> <p>Monitor use in the areas</p>	<p>Conduct wilderness attribute monitoring using the Forest’s wilderness rangers or through partnerships with the Wilderness Institute and Montana Wilderness Association</p>

Objective	Design Features
<p>recommended for wilderness in the Bitterroot National Forest Plan</p> <p>Monitor use in inventoried roadless areas</p>	<p>Conduct wilderness attribute monitoring using the Forest's wilderness rangers or through partnerships with the Wilderness Institute and Montana Wilderness Association</p> <p>Conduct roadless character monitoring using the Forest's wilderness rangers or through partnerships with the Wilderness Institute and Montana Wilderness Association</p> <p>Monitoring would be subject to funding.</p>
Cultural Resources	
<p>Protect cultural resources (archeological resources and historic sites)</p> <p>Minimize introduction and spread of invasive plants which can displace traditional cultural plant populations and contribute to site erosion.</p>	<p>Restrict use of roads, trails, trail segments, or areas where motorized travel could adversely affect known cultural resources.</p> <p>If previously unidentified cultural resources are discovered during implementation, project activities in the vicinity will be halted and the Forest's Heritage professional will be notified immediately. If the Heritage specialist deems it necessary, mitigation or avoidance measures will be devised in consultation with the appropriate State Historic Preservation Officer and Tribal Preservation Officers, prior to resumption of project activities in that area.</p> <p>With respect to repeated instances of damage to historic buildings resulting from over-snow vehicle use, the Forest would assign increased Forest Protection Officer/Law Enforcement Officer presence or utilize electronic monitoring</p> <p>See Design Features for Invasive Plants</p>

2.4 MONITORING

Implementation monitoring is a standard operating procedure. It is used to assess whether a project was implemented as designed, and whether it complies with the Forest Plan. Input by Forest Service resource specialists, including fisheries biologists, wildlife biologists, soil scientists, hydrologists, and engineers, is regularly requested during project implementation. These specialists provide technical advice when questions arise during project implementation.

Monitoring is designed to catch and assess problems before or when they occur so corrective measures can be taken. As such, the implementation monitoring plan represents a quality control/quality assurance plan. Monitoring involves gathering information and observing management activities to document their effects on people and the environment. By its nature, implementation monitoring requires an adaptive approach to management. That means when undesirable or unexpected results or conditions are identified through monitoring, the project will be assessed and altered as needed to meet the intent of the mitigation or proposed activity. This is explicitly described in some activities (i.e. if new cultural resource sites or sensitive plants are identified, actions will be taken to protect the resource), but it is also implicit for the project as a whole. The Bitterroot National Forest has the authority, under 36 CFR §295.5, to initiate emergency closures of roads, trails, or areas for up to one year to protect water, soil, and fisheries resources which are negatively impacted or adversely affected by motorized vehicle use.

If or when these situations arise, adjustments will be made on the basis of the desired and predicted outcomes discussed in the Record of Decision and this FEIS.

Monitoring results provide Forest Service Line Officers and employees, Regional and Washington Offices, Congress, and the general public information on the progress and results of implementing Forest projects, including the Travel Management Planning Project.

The Bitterroot National Forest's Forest Plan Monitoring and Evaluation Report contain a number of monitoring items which are applicable to motorized/mechanical transport use on the Forest. These include Invasive Weeds-Item 10; Water and Sediment Yield-Item 17; Cumulative Watershed Effects-Item 19; Riparian Area Condition-Item 22; Road Construction, Mitigation, and Maintenance-Item 24; Off-Highway Vehicle Effects on Lands-Item 28; Recreation Site and Trail Use Effects on Land-Item 29; and Law Enforcement Efforts on the Bitterroot National Forest. Please refer to the {Project File folder 'forest_plan_and_monitoring,' Project File document FPMON.pdf }for a listing of past monitoring reports.

The Bitterroot National Forest will monitor the unauthorized routes not designated on the MVUM through the Travel Management Planning Project. Using guidance contained in the Forest Plan, prioritization of treatments will occur, to be completed through project-specific NEPA analysis.

Several sources of funding are available for monitoring; however, no assignment of funding sources will be made at this time, as the future availability of funds for monitoring is unknown. Project monitoring is dependent upon available funding.

As mandated under 36 CFR §212.57 (Monitoring) of the 2005 Travel Management Rule, the Bitterroot National Forest will monitor for any unauthorized routes not designated on the MVUM. Additionally, the Forest will monitor the use and effects of new forms of motorized and mechanical transport (including bicycles) on the roads, trails, and areas where such use is designated. If monitoring determines adverse impacts are occurring due to new forms of motorized/mechanized transport, actions will be taken to address the impacts.

2.5 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED STUDY

In response to scoping of the Proposed Action, and in comments received on the DEIS, commenters provided a number of suggestions for “alternative” methods for achieving the project’s Purpose and Need. The NEPA regulations require Federal agencies to rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives, and for alternatives which were eliminated from detailed study, briefly discuss the reasons for their having been eliminated” ((40 CFR 1502.14(a)). “Alternatives not considered in detail may include, but are not limited to, those that fail to meet the purpose and need, are technologically infeasible or illegal, or would result in unreasonable environmental harm” (Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 1909.15 (14-)). Additionally, “An alternative should meet the purpose and need and address one or more significant issues related to the proposed action” (36 CFR 220.5(e).

During the alternative development process, a number of alternatives were considered and dismissed from further analysis. These alternatives, and the rationale for dismissing them, are described below:

2.5.1 “ORIGINAL” PROPOSED ACTION

The “original” Proposed Action (*A Starting Point*) was described in the scoping document released for public review in September 2007. Based on feedback from the public, additional information gathered by resource specialists on reviews conducted during the 2008 field season, and internal ID Team discussion, a number of changes were made to the Proposed Action as it was initially described. Consequently, the Responsible Official decided to revise the Proposed Action as described and analyzed in the DEIS, and included the “original” Proposed Action as an Alternative Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Study.

The “original” Proposed Action contained motorized routes suggested by various user groups. However, during field reviews conducted by members of the ID Team during the 2008 field season, it was determined that a number of these routes were not viable for motorized use for several reasons including resource concerns (wildlife security, soils, and fisheries) and maintenance issues. These routes (trails) were not included in the Proposed Action – Revised.

Also, the “original” Proposed Action stated “The proposed action will designate all sites where motorized use is allowed, including marking the routes to dispersed campsites on the motor vehicle use map. This is a change from the existing condition on the Forest Visitor Map that states ‘Unless currently restricted, cross-county travel to a campsite within 300 feet of a road or trail is permitted by the most direct route causing the least damage.’ With the proposed action it will be clear where motorized access to a dispersed site (off a trail or road) is allowed.”

After further discussions, the ID Team recommended dropping the designation of dispersed camp sites and the marking of the routes to those sites in **Alternative 1** in the DEIS because it would be impractical; there are hundreds of dispersed sites on the Forest, and there is neither the budget nor the personnel to obtain GPS (Geographical Positioning System) coordinates for each site for mapping purposes.

2.5.2 DESIGNATE THE WEST SIDE OF THE BITTERROOT VALLEY FOR “QUIET USERS” AND ALLOW MOTORIZED USERS ACCESS TO THE EAST SIDE OF THE VALLEY

This would be consistent with the project’s Purpose and Need “[To] Address confusion where and when motorized use can occur and what types of vehicles are allowed” by “Clarify[ing] and simplify[ing] the motor vehicle use designations.” It would also make enforcement of the Travel Management Plan easier by restricting recreationists to one side of the Bitterroot Valley or the other. However, it would not be consistent with the Purpose and Need regarding “Quality of the recreational experience.” There may be locations on the east side of the Bitterroot Valley which appeal to nonmotorized users, just as there may be

areas on the west side which appeal to motorized users. In the absence of compelling environmental, social, and economic reasons to designate one side of the Valley to one form of recreation or the other, the decision to do so would be unreasonable.

2.5.3 ROADS FOR MOTORIZED USE AND TRAILS FOR NONMOTORIZED USE

This would be consistent with the project's Purpose and Need to "Address conflicts between motorized and nonmotorized uses" by physically separating the two types of recreation spatially. It would also address the project's objective to "Clarify and simplify the motor vehicle use designations." It would be easy to implement and enforce. However, it would not be consistent with the project's Purpose and Need regarding "Quality of the recreational experience." The alternative would arbitrarily deny certain types of motorized vehicles, primarily ATVs and motorcycles, from using trails. Conversely, it would deny nonmotorized use on roads, which may be more appealing to some users.

Furthermore, as noted in the 2005 Travel Management Rule, "Section 212.51 of the rule explicitly authorizes responsible officials to designate NFS trails for motor vehicle use" (p. 68277).

2.5.4 ALTERNATE USE OF TRAILS FOR MOTORIZED/NONMOTORIZED USE BY DAY OF THE WEEK OR OTHER SYSTEM (BY WEEKS, MONTHS, OR SEASON)

While this would be consistent with the project's Purpose and Need regarding "Address conflicts between motorized and nonmotorized uses" by physically separating the two types of uses in time, it would not be consistent with the project's objective to "Clarify and simplify the motor vehicle use designations." In fact, this alternative would most likely be confusing for users and difficult to implement and enforce. It may be hard for users to know when a specific route is available for which kind of use; this could lead to increased conflicts between user groups.

2.5.5 CLOSE ALL "USER CREATED" TRAILS/DO NOT ADD "USER CREATED" TRAILS TO THE SYSTEM

This would not be consistent with the project's Purpose and Need regarding "Improve quality of recreational experience" and "Ensure consistency with the 2005 Travel Management Rule." The Forest may want to increase motorized recreation opportunities where they provide quality recreation opportunities and experiences, and where there are no adverse resource impacts associated with designating unauthorized routes to the Forest's Transportation System.

As noted in the 2005 Travel Management Rule, "The Department [Forest Service] does not believe that immediate closure of all user-created routes, with local evaluation and public input, is necessary or appropriate" (p. 68270). Additionally, "Some user-created routes are well sited, provide excellent opportunities for outdoor recreation for motorized and nonmotorized users alike, involve less environmental impact than unrestricted cross-country motor vehicle use, and would enhance the system of designated routes and areas" (p. 68268).

"As stated in the preamble to the proposed rule, user-created roads and trails may be identified through public involvement and considered in the designation process. After public consideration and appropriate site-specific environmental analysis, some user-created routes may be designated for motor vehicle use pursuant to §212.51 of the final rule" {Project File folder 'usfs_direction_and_policies_laws,' Project File document DIRECTION-003.pdf, p. 68277}.

2.5.6 REQUEST TO KEEP ALL AREAS OF THE FOREST OPEN TO ALL FORMS OF RECREATION

This would not be consistent with the project's Purpose and Need regarding "Improve quality of recreational experience." Allowing motorized recreation on all areas of the Forest would not meet the Project's objective to "Provide areas for nonmotorized recreation experiences." Additionally, it would be

inconsistent with the Purpose and Need to “Address conflicts between motorized and nonmotorized uses.” It would likely continue conflicts between motorized and nonmotorized recreationists, particularly in wilderness study areas and inventoried roadless areas. Lastly, it would not be consistent with the Purpose and Need regarding “Integrate resource considerations into the route system.” Another of the project’s objectives is to “Close routes to motorized use that have resource concerns that cannot reasonably be mitigated.

Allowing motorized vehicles in Designated Wilderness would not be in compliance with the 1964 Wilderness Act or the Forest Plan. The Recreation standard for Forest Plan Management Areas 7a, 7b, and 7c 9 (Designated Wilderness) states “Maintain existing primitive and semi-primitive nonmotorized settings” (USDA Forest Service 1987a, III-44, III-49, and III-53).

Allowing motorized use in wilderness study areas may not be in compliance with the Montana Wilderness Study Act of 1977, which states “Except as otherwise provided by this section, and subject to existing private rights, the wilderness study areas designated by this Act shall, until Congress determines otherwise, be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture so as to maintain their presently existing wilderness character and potential for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System {Project File folder ‘usfs_direction_and_policies_laws,’ Project File document DIRECTION-004.pdf}.

In the Bitterroot National Forest Plan, one of the goals for Management Area 6 (Recommended Wilderness) states “Pending action by Congress, manage to maintain the presently existing wilderness characteristic and potential for inclusion in the wilderness system.” Recreation standard (3) states “Continue current uses which do not detract from wilderness values. Transitory uses such as chainsaws, trail bikes and snowmobiles are appropriate if permitted by the Forest’s Travel Plan” (USDA Forest Service 1987a, III-41).

2.5.7 ALL ORV ROUTES SHOULD BE LIMITED TO THOSE ROUTES OPEN TO FULL SIZE VEHICLE TRAVEL

This would not be consistent with the project’s Purpose and Need regarding “Improve quality of the recreational experience.” Restricting motorized use to routes only open to full size vehicles would deny other motorized vehicles, such as ATVs and motorcycles, the opportunity to recreate on a variety of routes, including double track trails.

2.5.8 ALL ROADS TO BE CLOSED TO FULL SIZE VEHICLES SHOULD BE CONVERTED TO ATV ROUTES

Converting all roads to be closed to full sized vehicles to ATV routes would be inconsistent with the project’s Purpose and Need regarding “Integrate resource considerations into the route system.” The rationale for proposing to close roads to full size vehicles includes concerns regarding effects to water resources and fisheries (bull trout) from sedimentation, the low motorized recreation opportunity (short spur, no loop or destination), and impacts to wildlife, among others. In some instances, adverse effects to resources can also occur from ATVs, so this use would also be prohibited.

However, there are currently approximately 600 miles of roads closed to full sized vehicles but open to seasonal or yearlong use by ATVs and motorcycles (coincident routes) where it has been determined that motorized use can occur without adverse impacts to resources, including wildlife and water resources and fisheries.

2.5.9 WORK TOWARDS A “NO NET LOSS”

Nothing in the 2005 Travel Management Rule, the Bitterroot National Forest Plan, or the project’s Purpose and Need states the need to work towards a “no net loss” of opportunities for motorized recreation.

In developing **Alternative 3** (Motorized Emphasis), the members of the ID Team considered additional opportunities for motorized recreation, many of which were provided in comments in response to scoping by individuals, users groups, and other organizations. However, for several reasons, including resource concerns and maintenance issues, not all of these could be carried forward as “new” routes.

2.5.10 MOTORIZED USERS BE PUT IN ROADED AREAS AND NONMOTORIZED IN ROADLESS AND WILDERNESS

While this would be consistent with the project’s Purpose and Need regarding “Address conflicts between motorized and nonmotorized uses” by separating them spatially, it would not be consistent with the Purpose and Need regarding “Improve quality of the recreational experience.” It would deny the opportunity for nonmotorized recreationists to recreate in roaded areas.

2.5.11 EVERYTHING REMAINS OPEN TO MOTORIZED USE OUTSIDE OF WILDERNESS

This would not be consistent with the project’s Purpose and Need regarding “Improve quality of the recreational experience.” For example, allowing motorized recreation in all areas outside wilderness would not meet the Project’s objective to “Provide areas of nonmotorized recreation experiences.” Additionally, it would be inconsistent with the Purpose and Need addressing “Conflicts between motorized and nonmotorized uses.” It would likely contribute to increased conflicts between motorized and nonmotorized recreationists.

Furthermore, it would not be consistent with the Purpose and Need regarding “Integrate resource considerations into the route system.” It would not meet the project’s objective to “Close routes to motorized use that have resource concerns that cannot reasonably be mitigated.”

The 2005 Travel Management Rule states “National Forests belong to all Americans, but Americans do not have a right to unrestricted use of National Forests. Congress established the Forest Service to provide reasonable regulation of the National Forests so that future generations can continue to enjoy them.” (p. 68266).

2.5.12 COMPLY WITH THE FOREST PLAN STANDARD FOR ELK HABITAT EFFECTIVENESS

In Chapter 1 of this document it was noted that **Alternative 1**, along with **Alternatives 3 and 4**, would require a project-specific amendment to the Bitterroot Forest Plan, Wildlife and Fish forest-wide management standard (14) pertaining to elk habitat effectiveness (EHE). This proposed amendment recognizes that the EHE standard is not currently being met in 111 third-order drainages across the Bitterroot National Forest. **Alternatives 1 and 4** would bring one or more of these third-order drainages into compliance with the Forest Plan EHE standard, but at least 70 third-order drainages would continue to not meet the standard in all alternatives.

Meeting the EHE standard would require closing approximately 504 miles of roads, which is about 33 percent of the 1,537 miles for roads currently open to full sized vehicles on the Forest. Many of these closures would eliminate motorized access to important recreational facilities such as major road systems, popular trailheads, and several lookouts. This would not be consistent with the Project’s Purpose and Need regarding “Improve quality of recreational experience.” This would affect the public’s ability to access trailheads and other recreation sites, as well as driving for pleasure.

Elk populations have increased dramatically throughout the Bitterroot drainage since the Forest Plan was signed. Road use restrictions implemented on a project-level basis have improved EHE in some third-order drainages during this time, and many currently meet the EHE standard, while others do not. Despite not complying with specific Forest Plan standards for EHE in all third-order drainages, the Forest Plan

objective of maintaining the current (1987) level of big-game hunting opportunities has been achieved and exceeded. The number of hunters, as well as the number of elk (until recently), has continued to increase, and the length of the general hunting season has remained at five weeks. The fact that the Forest continues to meet objectives for elk numbers appears to indicate that existing EHE levels are generally not a limiting factor for elk populations in the Bitterroot drainage.

2.5.13 APPLY THE ELK HABITAT EFFECTIVENESS AMENDMENT AT THE FOREST PLAN LEVEL

During the Objection Process for the Draft ROD that was circulated in April 2015, one of the issues raised was related to the Project Specific amendment for EHE. The objectors suggested that a Forest Plan level amendment was needed instead of the project level amendment. This would involve a new Forest Plan standard to be written regarding EHE.

Elk populations have increased dramatically throughout the Bitterroot drainage since the Forest Plan was signed. Road use restrictions implemented on a project-level basis have improved EHE in some third-order drainages during this time, and many currently meet the EHE standard, while others do not. Despite not complying with specific Forest Plan standards for EHE in all third-order drainages, the Forest Plan objective of maintaining the current (1987) level of big-game hunting opportunities has been achieved and exceeded. The number of hunters, as well as the number of elk (until recently), has continued to increase, and the length of the general hunting season has remained at five weeks. The fact that the Forest continues to meet objectives for elk numbers appears to indicate that existing EHE levels are generally not a limiting factor for elk populations in the Bitterroot drainage.

If elk populations were to begin to show a negative trend, having the current standard in place would allow the Forest to adjust management of open roads to try and improve the populations. Based on this information, it appears preferable to leave the current standard in place instead of amending the Forest Plan to have a new standard.

2.5.14 NO MOTORIZED ACCESS FOR DISPERSED CAMPING

Motorized wheeled access for dispersed camping is a popular and important recreation opportunity on the Bitterroot National Forest. Not allowing this activity would be inconsistent with the project's Purpose and Need to "Improve the quality of the recreational experience." The FEIS contains the following design feature specific to motorized access for dispersed camping: "Monitor dispersed campsites and access routes. When adverse impacts are noted, appropriate actions such as restricting or eliminating access and rehabilitating sites will occur."

2.5.15 QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF MOTORIZED ROUTES IS EQUAL TO NON-MOTORIZED ROUTES...MOTORIZED VISITORS HAVE THE NEED FOR TRAIL SYSTEMS AND AREAS EQUAL TO THOSE AVAILABLE TO NONMOTORIZED VISITORS

As stated in the 2005 Travel Management Rule, "The Department [Forest Service] believes that National Forests should provide access for both motorized and nonmotorized users in a manner that is environmentally sustainable over the long term. The National Forest System is not reserved for the exclusive use of any one group, nor must every use be accommodated on every acre. It is entirely appropriate for different areas of the National Forests to provide different opportunities for recreation" {Project File folder 'usfs_direction_and_policies_laws,' Project File document DIRECTION-003.pdf, p. 68266}.

The Travel Management Planning Project identifies opportunities for both motorized and nonmotorized recreation constrained by resource and social criteria established in the 2005 Travel Management Rule (36

CFR 212.55). Setting an arbitrary formula which equalizes motorized and nonmotorized opportunities would not meet the intent of the Rule.

2.5.16 DO NOT MANAGE RECOMMENDED WILDERNESS THE SAME AS DESIGNATED WILDERNESS

The Forest Plan goal for Management Area 6 (recommended additions to wilderness) states “Pending action by Congress, manage to maintain the presently existing wilderness characteristics and potential for inclusion in the wilderness system.” Additionally, Management Area 6 Recreation standard (3) states “Continue current uses which do not detract from wilderness values. Transitory uses such as chainsaws, trailbikes and snowmobiles are appropriate if permitted by the Forest’s Travel Plan” (USDA Forest Service 1987a, III-41). The Bitterroot National Forest Plan direction is clear that recommended wilderness should be managed consistent with maintaining wilderness characteristics, and the Travel Management Planning Project can make changes in those areas to be consistent with wilderness characteristics.

However, in response to comments on the DEIS, changes were made to **Alternative 3** in the FEIS to allow motorized/mechanical transport in recommended wilderness areas on the Bitterroot National Forest for both summer and over-snow use.

This will provide the Responsible Official the opportunity to consider the effects, both beneficial and adverse, in relation to the other alternatives, and whether to include the activity as part of the Selected Alternative in the Record of Decision for the Travel Management Planning Project.

While mountain biking may not always have physical impacts on the landscape, prohibiting mountain bikes and other mechanical and motorized transport from recommended wilderness areas acknowledges there are other, social effects, to wilderness character associated with these types of uses.

2.5.17 REMOVE THE SAPPHIRE WILDERNESS STUDY AREA FROM THE MONTANA WILDERNESS STUDY ACT

The Montana Wilderness Study Act of 1977 is a federal law enacted by the United States Congress. Only Congress has the authority to change the law; the Forest Service cannot effect changes to the law. Changes to the Montana Wilderness Study Act are beyond the scope of the Travel Management Planning Project.

2.5.18 ALLOW MOTORIZED GAME RETRIEVAL OFF OF DESIGNATED ROUTES

The 2001 Tri-State Decision, which amended the Bitterroot National Forest Plan, prohibited motorized wheeled cross country travel for big game retrieval: “This game retrieval restriction would: reduce the conflicts between motorized and non-motorized users during the hunting season; reduce the potential for introducing invasive weeds; reduce the potential for soil erosion; reduce the potential for impacts to wildlife; be more responsive to numerous public comments that were expressed about the inappropriateness of allowing an exception for game retrieval; and be consistent with the long-term goal of using vehicles on designated routes” (USDI/USDA Forest Service, 2001b, p. 4).

While motorized game retrieval would be permitted under the 2005 Travel Management Rule (p. 68274), it is not being considered under the Travel Management Planning Project for the following reasons: None of the National Forests adjacent to the Bitterroot National Forest, including the Lolo, Beaverhead-Deerlodge, and Salmon-Challis, allow it, and permitting it on the Bitterroot National Forest would not be consistent with the project’s Purpose and Need to “Address confusion where and when motorized use can occur... .” Additionally, it could adversely impact wildlife security and big game habitat, which would be inconsistent with the Purpose and Need to “Integrate resource considerations into the route system.” It could result in the creation of unauthorized routes, with unacceptable resource damage and safety concerns. Finally, motorized game retrieval could result in conflict of uses with nonmotorized uses, which would be in contradiction with the project’s Purpose and Need to “Address conflicts between motorized and nonmotorized users.”

2.5.19 DESIGNATE ALL EXISTING SINGLE TRACK TRAILS OPEN TO MOTORCYCLE USE

Allowing motorcycle use on all existing single track trails would be inconsistent with the project's Purpose and Needs to "Address conflicts between motorized and nonmotorized uses" and to "Integrate resource concerns into the route system." Single-track trails are being proposed to be closed to motorcycles due to effects on wildlife and habitat security, and to eliminate the potential for conflict among uses.

2.5.20 CONSIDER LAND USE DESIGNATIONS, SUCH AS NATIONAL RECREATION AREAS, NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREAS, OR NATIONAL PROTECTION AREAS, WHICH WOULD ALLOW MOUNTAIN BIKE USE, FOR RECOMMENDED WILDERNESS AREAS

Changing land use designations is beyond the scope of the Travel Management Planning Project; this would more appropriately be addressed during Forest Plan revision. However, in response to public comments received on the DEIS, a change was made to **Alternative 3** in the FEIS to allow motorized/mechanical transport in recommended wilderness areas on the Bitterroot National Forest for both summer and over-snow use.

This will provide the Responsible Official the opportunity to consider the effects, both beneficial and adverse, in relation to the other alternatives, and whether to include the activity as part of the Selected Alternative in the Record of Decision for the Travel Management Planning Project.

While mountain biking may not always have physical impacts on the landscape, prohibiting mountain bikes and other motorized/mechanical transport from recommended wilderness areas acknowledges there are other, social effects, to wilderness character associated with these types of uses.

2.5.21 ALLOW MOTORCYCLES AND HORSES ON THE SAME TRAIL SYSTEMS AND ATVs ON THEIR OWN TRAIL SYSTEM

While this would partially address the project's Purpose and Need regarding "Address conflicts among uses" by physically separating horses and ATVs, it would not work to minimize conflicts between motorcycles and horses. Additionally, it would not be consistent with the project's Purpose and Need regarding "Quality of recreation experience." Not allowing motorcycles and horses on ATV trails would deny them a recreation experience.

2.5.22 CLOSE ALL ROADS FOR THE HUNTING SEASON AT THE BEGINNING OF ARCHERY SEASON

While this would address the project's Purpose and Need regarding "Address conflicts among motorized and nonmotorized uses" by helping reduce the potential for conflict between uses in unroaded areas where motorized access is a relatively recent phenomena, it would not be consistent with the Purpose and Need to "Improve quality of recreational experience." Many local residents harvest firewood for heating their homes, and forcing them to harvest in July and August, prior to the routes being closed, could result in an increase in wildfires, as there would be more people running chainsaws in the woods during the hottest and driest months of the year. Additionally, many firewood gathers also use the roads in September not only to harvest firewood, but also to scout game for the upcoming big game hunting season.

2.5.23 DESIGNATED OPEN ROADS BE LIMITED TO THOSE THAT CAN BE ADEQUATELY MAINTAINED WITHIN AGENCY BUDGETS AND CAPABILITIES

As stated in the 2005 Travel Management Rule, "The Department [Forest Service] agrees that availability of resources should be a consideration in designating routes for motor vehicle use. Section 212.55(a) of the

proposed and final rules includes as a criterion for designation ‘the need for maintenance and administration of roads, trails, and areas that would arise if the uses under consideration are designated, and the availability of resources for that maintenance and administration.’ The Department [Forest Service] believes, however, that this determination involves the exercise of judgment and discretion on the part of the responsible official. At times, resources are scarce, and the Department (Forest Service) does not believe that this scarcity should lead to blanket closures of NFS [National Forest System] lands to recreational uses. Volunteers and cooperators can supplement agency resources for maintenance and administration, and their contributions should be considered in this evaluation.” (p. 68281).

2.5.24 THE FOREST SERVICE PURPOSELY REFUSES TO OFFER AN ALTERNATIVE THAT ADDRESSES CURRENT DESIGNATED PLUS EXISTING TRAILS AS REQUIRED BY THE 2005 TRAVEL PLAN PROCESS

Alternative 2 (Existing Condition) in the FEIS is represented by the current (2005) Bitterroot National Forest travel plan and supporting prohibitions. Permissible motorized uses include those roads, trails, and areas not otherwise prohibited, including use of an undetermined number of unauthorized routes which were created prior to the 2001 Tri-State Decision.

2.5.25 KEEP EVERY MILE OPEN TO MOTORCYCLE RIDERS, FOR RESOURCE SUSTAINABILITY AND TO REDUCE THE FREQUENCY OF ENCOUNTERS.

While on one hand, this would be consistent with the project’s Purpose and Need regarding “Integrate resource considerations into the route system,” as it acknowledges that closing trails to motorcycles would result in concentrating use on fewer miles of trails, which may result in adverse resource impacts and more frequent encounters with nonmotorized uses. Additionally, it would be consistent with the Purpose and Need to “Address conflicts between motorized and nonmotorized uses,” as it again recognizes the effect of closing trails on nonmotorized uses. However, on the other hand, it would not be consistent with the Purpose and Need regarding “Integrate resource considerations into the route system” which reflects the impact that motorcycle use is currently having on resources. Additionally, it would not be consistent with the Purpose and Need to “Improve quality of the recreational experience,” which responds to the impact that motorcycles are having on nonmotorized uses, particularly with respect to those in inventoried roadless areas.

2.5.26 CLOSE MOST OF THE TRAILS TO NONMOTORIZED USERS

This would not be consistent with the project’s Purpose and Need to “Address conflicts with motorized and nonmotorized use.” It would likely result in increased conflicts as nonmotorized use would be concentrated on the few remaining trails allowing such use. Additionally, it would not be consistent with the Purpose and Need to “Improve quality of the recreation experience,” as it would diminish the quality for nonmotorized recreationists. Furthermore, it has been acknowledged that uses-conflicts are often a one-way conflict, where nonmotorized recreationists perceive that motorized uses are interfering with their activities, but motorized recreationists are generally indifferent to nonmotorized uses.

2.5.27 CONSIDER A PROJECT-SPECIFIC AMENDMENT TO CHANGE THE BOUNDARIES OF THE SAPPHIRE AND BLUE JOINT WILDERNESS STUDY

The Sapphire and Blue Joint Wilderness Study Areas were designated in the Montana Wilderness Study Act of 1977, which is a federal law enacted by the United States Congress. Only Congress has the authority to change the law; the Forest Service cannot effect changes to the law. Changing the boundaries of the wilderness study areas is beyond the scope of the Travel Management Planning Project.

2.6 COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

This section summarizes and compares the alternatives by activities and how they respond to the significant issues. For more information, please refer to the individual resource analyses in Chapter 3.

2.6.1 COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES BY ACTIVITY

The changes proposed with **Alternatives 1, 3, and 4** is shown in Table 2-20; a summary of the summer motorized route status and number of miles for the four alternatives is displayed in Table 2-21.

SUMMER

Table 2- 20: Proposed Changes by Alternative

Route Status	Alt. 1	Alt. 2	Alt. 3	Alt. 4
	Miles	Miles	Miles	Miles
Roads open to all vehicles ¹ - yearlong	0	0	0	0
Roads open to all vehicles – seasonally	0	0	0	0
Roads open to highway legal vehicles - yearlong	-41 ²	0	-14	-312
Roads open to highway legal vehicles – seasonally	-9	0	8	-140
Proposed roads open to highway legal vehicles – yearlong ³	0.4	0	0.4	0.4
Trails ⁴ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – yearlong	-74	0	-38	-100
Trails ⁴ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – seasonally	9	0	47	-434
Proposed trails ⁵ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – seasonally	10	0	10	0
Trails open to motorcycles - yearlong	-246	0	-40	-324
Trails open to motorcycles – seasonally ⁶	43	0	109	-68
Change in total miles open to motorized use	-308	0	82	-1,378

¹ Includes highway-legal vehicles and unlicensed ATVs and motorcycles

² (-) indicates decrease

³ This is a connector between two existing roads which will require separate NEPA analysis and decision. This will be shown on the FEIS map, but will not be included on the MVUM until the analysis is completed and the decision is signed

⁴ Most of these trails open yearlong and seasonally, are roads closed to full size vehicles, but open to ATVs and motorcycles; these are known as “coincident routes.” Please refer to the FEIS, Chapter 3, Sections 3.1 (Transportation) and 3.2 (Recreation and Trails) for additional information. Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Recreation and Trails analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3 H

⁵ These include connectors and a new trail, both of which will require separate NEPA analyses and decision. These will be shown on the FEIS map, but will not be included on the MVUM until the analyses are completed and the decisions are signed

⁶ Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Recreation and Trails analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3 H

Table 2- 21: Comparison of Alternatives- Cumulative

Route Status	Alt. 1	Alt. 2	Alt. 3	Alt. 4
	Miles	Miles	Miles	Miles
Roads open to all vehicles ¹ - yearlong	10	10	10	10
Roads open to all vehicles – seasonally ²	67 ³	67	67	67
Roads open to highway legal vehicles - yearlong	846	887	873	575
Roads open to highway legal vehicles – seasonally ²	560	569	577	429
Proposed roads open to highway legal vehicles – yearlong ⁴	0.4	0	0.4	0.4

Route Status	Alt. 1	Alt. 2	Alt. 3.	Alt. 4
	Miles	Miles	Miles	Miles
Trails ⁵ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – yearlong	36	110	72	10
Trails ⁵ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – seasonally	559	550	597	116
Proposed trails ⁶ open to vehicles 50” or less in width – seasonally	10	0	10	0
Trails open to motorcycles - yearlong	84	330	290	6
Trails open to motorcycles – seasonally ⁷	121	78	187	10
Total miles open to motorized use	2,293	2,601	2,683	1,223

¹ Includes highway-legal vehicles and unlicensed ATVs and motorcycles

² Descriptions of seasons of use are detailed in the Transportation Section, Chapter 3, Section 3.1.3 C

³ Reflects a recent law in Idaho which required a change in the MVUM for Road #468 (Nez Perce Trail) from “Open to Highway Legal Vehicles- Seasonally” (MVUM 4) to “Open to All Vehicles -Seasonally” (MVUM 2). This change was independent of the Travel Management Planning Project. For additional information, please refer to {Project File ‘transportation,’ Project File document TRANS-006.pdf}.

⁴ This is a connector between two existing roads which will require separate NEPA analysis and decision. This will be shown on the FEIS map, but will not be included on the MVUM until the analysis is completed and the decision is signed

⁵ Most of these trails, open yearlong and seasonally, are roads closed to full size vehicles, but open to ATVs and motorcycles; these are known as “coincident routes.” Please refer to the FEIS, Chapter 3, Sections 3.1 (Transportation) and 3.2 (Recreation and Trails) for additional information. Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Recreation and Trails analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3 H

⁶ These include connectors and a new trail which will require separate NEPA analysis and decision. These will be shown on the FEIS map, but will not be included on the MVUM until the analyses are completed and the decisions are signed

⁷ Descriptions of seasons of use are provided in the Recreation and Trails analysis, Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3 H

OVER-SNOW

A summary of the change in acres of areas open to over-snow vehicle use for **Alternatives 1, 3, and 4** is shown in Table 2-22:

Table 2- 22: Proposed Changes by Alternative

Route Status	Alt. 1	Alt. 2	Alt. 3	Alt. 4
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres
Areas open to over-snow vehicle use – no restrictions	-177,292 ¹	0	4,679	-381,302
Areas open to over-snow vehicle use - seasonally	-7,241	0	0	-7,241
Change in total acres open to motorized use	-184,533	0	4,679	-388,543

¹ (-) indicates decrease

A summary of the acres open to over-snow vehicle use for the four alternatives is shown in Table 2-23:

Table 2- 23: Comparison of Alternatives- Cumulative

Route Status	Alt. 1	Alt. 2	Alt. 3	Alt. 4
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres
Areas open to over-snow vehicle use – no restrictions	522,592	699,884	704,563	318,582
Areas open to over-snow vehicle use - seasonally	41,856	49,097	49,097	41,856
Total acres open to motorized use	564,448	748,981	753,660	360,438

2.6.2 COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES BY ISSUES

Chapter 3 analyzes the effects of the alternatives on the significant issues raised through public involvement; these are listed in Tables 2-1 and 2-3. Tables 2-24 and 2-25 summarize the results of the analyses.

Table 2- 24: Comparison of the Alternatives by Issues - Summer

Issue	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Motorized/ mechanical transport use in inventoried roadless areas (IRAs) impacts their roadless characteristics Measurement Indicator: Miles of motorized routes in IRAs	5.3 miles of roads 158.8 miles of trails	9.2 miles of roads 311.8 miles of trails	9.2 miles of roads 361.1 miles of trails	4.3 miles of roads 1.6 miles of trails
Motorized/ mechanical transport use in Montana Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) impacts their wilderness character Measurement Indicator: Miles of motorized routes in WSAs	0 miles of roads 47.2 miles of trails	3.3 miles roads 94.6 miles of trails	3.3 miles roads 111.7 miles or trails	0 miles of roads 0 miles of trails
Motorized/ mechanical transport				

Issue	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
use in the areas recommended for wilderness designation (RWAs) in the Forest Plan impacts their wilderness character				
Measurement Indicator:				
Miles of motorized routes within RWA	0 miles of roads	0 miles of roads	0 miles of roads	0 miles of roads
	0 miles of trails	39.7 miles of trails	63.6 miles of trails	0 miles of trails

Issue	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
<p>The designation of motorized routes affects motorized and nonmotorized recreation opportunities by altering the amount, type, and season of motorized and nonmotorized routes</p> <p>Measurement Indicator:</p> <p>Miles of motorized routes by vehicle type and season of use</p> <p>YL = Yearlong S = Seasonally</p>	<p>Road miles open all vehicles YL = 10</p> <p>Road miles open all vehicles S = 67</p> <p>Roads open highway legal vehicles YL = 846</p> <p>Roads open highway legal vehicles S = 560</p> <p><50" miles open YL = 36</p> <p><50" miles open S = 559</p> <p><50" miles open S: 10¹</p> <p>Motorcycle miles open YL = 84</p>	<p>Road miles open all vehicles YL = 10</p> <p>Road miles open all vehicles S = 67</p> <p>Roads open highway legal vehicles YL = 887</p> <p>Roads open highway legal vehicles S = 569</p> <p><50" miles open YL = 110</p> <p><50" miles open S = 550</p> <p>Motorcycle miles open YL = 330</p>	<p>Road miles open all vehicles YL = 10</p> <p>Road miles open all vehicles S = 67</p> <p>Roads open highway legal vehicles YL = 873</p> <p>Roads open highway legal vehicles S = 577</p> <p><50" miles open YL = 72</p> <p><50" miles open S = 597</p> <p><50" miles open S: 10¹</p> <p>Motorcycle miles open YL = 290</p>	<p>Road miles open all vehicles YL = 10</p> <p>Road miles open all vehicles S = 67</p> <p>Roads open highway legal vehicles YL = 575</p> <p>Roads open highway legal vehicles S = 429</p> <p><50" miles open YL = 10</p> <p><50" miles open S = 116</p> <p>Motorcycle miles open YL = 6</p>

Issue	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
	Motorcycle miles open S = 121	Motorcycle miles open S = 78	Motorcycle miles open S = 187	Motorcycle miles open S = 10
Miles of nonmotorized routes (does not include the Selway-Bitterroot, Frank Church and Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness Areas)	540 miles of roads 329 miles of trails	422 miles of roads 143 miles of trails	443 miles of roads 40 miles of trails	1,373 miles of roads 570 miles of trails
Acres of Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) by setting	Primitive Acres: 583,518 SPNM Acres: 226,960 SPM Acres: 289,051 RNA Acres: 483,497 Rural Acres: 9,717	Primitive Acres: 583,518 SPNM Acres: 226,688 SPM Acres: 289,052 RNA Acres: 483,497 Rural Acres: 9,717	Primitive Acres: 583,518 SPNM Acres: 226,752 SPM Acres: 185,743 RNA Acres: 587,011 Rural Acres: 9,717	Primitive Acres: 583,518 SPNM Acres: 448,388 SPM Acres: 67,352 RNA Acres: 483,767 Rural Acres: 9,717

Miles of Motorized Routes Within Each ROS by Management Area	Mgmt Area	ROS Emphasis By MA	ROS Type	Alt. 1 Miles of Motorized Routes in ROS/MA (Change in miles from Existing Condition)	Alt. 2 Miles of Motorized Routes in ROS/MA	Alt. 3 Miles of Motorized Routes in ROS/MA (Change in miles from Existing Condition)	Alt.4 Miles of Motorized Routes in ROS/MA (Change in miles from Existing Condition)
	1	RN	R/RN	613 miles (-39)	652 miles	669 miles (+17)	321 miles (-331)
	1		SPM	47 miles (-17)	64 miles	65 miles (+1)	15 miles (-49)
	1		SPNM	1 mile (-7)	8 miles	8 miles (0)	1 mile (-7)
	1	TOTAL		661 miles (-63)	724 miles	742 miles (+18)	337 miles (-387)
	2	RN	R/RN	741 miles (-64)	805 miles	790 miles (-15)	358 miles (-447)
	2		SPM	19 miles (-6)	25 miles	25 miles (0)	14 miles (-11)
	2		SPNM	2 miles (0)	2 miles	2 miles (0)	1 mile (-1)
	2	TOTAL		762 miles (-70)	832 miles	817 miles (-15)	373 miles (-459)
	3a	RN	R/RN	352 miles (-23)	375 miles	379 miles (+4)	200 miles (-175)
	3a		SPM	15 miles (-9)	24 miles	24 miles (0)	8 miles (-16)
	3a		SPNM	7 miles (0)	7 miles	7 miles (0)	6 miles (-1)
	3a	TOTAL		374 miles (-32)	406 miles	410 miles (+4)	214 miles (-192)
	3c	RN	R/RN	34 miles (-4)	37 miles	37 miles (0)	24 miles (-13)
	3c		SPM	1 mile (0)	1 mile	1 mile (0)	1 mile (0)
	3c		SPNM	3 miles (0)	3 miles	3 miles (0)	2 miles (-1)
	3c	TOTAL		38 miles (-4)	41 miles	41 miles	27 miles (-14)
	5	SPNM/SPM	R/RN	51 miles (-23)	74 miles	78 miles (+4)	30 miles (-44)
	5		SPM	75 miles (-58)	133 miles	153 miles (+20)	2 miles (-131)
	5		SPNM	2 miles (-04)	6 miles	6 miles (0)	1 mile (-5)
	5	TOTAL		128 miles (-85)	213 miles	237 miles (+24)	33 miles (-180)
	6	P/SP	P	0 miles	0 miles	2 miles or (+2)	0 miles
	6		RN	1 mile (-4)	5 miles	8 miles (+3)	1 mile (-4)

Miles of Motorized Routes Within Each ROS by Management Area	Mgmt Area	ROS Emphasis By MA	ROS Type	Alt. 1 Miles of Motorized Routes in ROS/MA (Change in miles from Existing Condition)	Alt. 2 Miles of Motorized Routes in ROS/MA	Alt. 3 Miles of Motorized Routes in ROS/MA (Change in miles from Existing Condition)	Alt.4 Miles of Motorized Routes in ROS/MA (Change in miles from Existing Condition)		
	6		SPM	7 miles (-26)	33 miles	41 miles (+8)	0 miles (-33)		
	6		SPNM	None (-4)	4 miles	15 miles (+11)	0 miles (-4)		
	6	TOTAL		8 miles (-34)	42 miles	66 miles (+24)	1 (-41)		
	8a	Mg w/ Adjcnt MA	RN	50 miles (-5)	55 miles	65 miles (+10)	17 miles (-38)		
	8a		SPM	7 miles (-4)	11 miles	11 miles (0)	0 miles (-11)		
	8a		SPNM	2 miles (-1)	3 miles	3 miles (0)	1 mile (-2)		
	8a	TOTAL		59 miles (-10)	69 miles	79 miles (+10)	18 miles (-51)		
	8b	Mg w/ Adjcnt MA	RN	14 miles (+2)	12 miles	14 miles (+2)	7 miles (-5)		
	8b		SPM	1 mile (0)	1 mile	1 mile (0)	1 mile (0		
	8b	TOTAL		15 miles (+2)	13 miles	15 miles (+2)	8 miles (-5)		
	9	Defined by Adjcnt MA	RN	3 miles (-1)	4 miles	4 miles (0)	3 miles (-1)		
	9		SPM	1 mile (0)	1 mile	1 mile (0)	None (-1)		
	9	TOTAL		4 miles (-1)	5 miles	5 miles (0)	3 miles (-2)		
	Issue		Alternative 1		Alternative 2		Alternative 3		Alternative 4
Designation of motorized routes impacts water resources, fish and aquatic habitat, soils, wildlife security, and									

Issue	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
invasive plants				
Measurement Indicators:				
Total Potential Motorized Sediment –Percent of Background (Water Resources):				
Number of Watersheds with 303(d) Streams – <u>Reduced</u> Indicator	11	0	4	22
Number of Watersheds with 303(d) Streams – <u>Unchanged</u> Indicator	14	0	20	3
Number of Watersheds with 303(d) Streams – <u>Increased</u> Indicator	0	0	1	0
Number of Full Beneficial Support Watersheds – Reduced Indicator	15	0	6	31
Number of Full Beneficial Support Watersheds – <u>Unchanged</u> Indicator	34	0	35	18

Issue	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Number of Full Beneficial Support Watersheds – <u>Increased</u> Indicator	0	0	8	0
Fish and Aquatic Habitat				
Measurement Indicators:				
Miles of open roads within 100 feet of perennial streams	54	57	57	24
Miles of open road within 300 feet of perennial streams	177	187	187	87
Miles of open motorized trail within 100 feet of perennial streams	34	69	74	1
Miles of open motorized trail within 300 feet of perennial streams	91	171	186	4
Soils				
Measurement				

Issue	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
indicators:				
Miles of new construction of motorized routes	10.8	0	10.1	0.4
Number of new routes for use by highway-legal vehicles	1	0	1	1
Number of new routes open seasonally to vehicles 50 inches or less in width	8	0	10	0
Acres of lost soil productivity associated with new motorized routes	24.3	0	24.5	1
Miles of motorized soils on high erosion-potential soils	101	107	113	56
Wildlife				
Measurement indicators:				
Percentage/acres of	21.9% / 246,176	16.5% / 185,403	18.5% / 207,823	26.4% / 297,455

Issue	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
herd units greater than 250 acres and more than 1/2 mile from a designated open route during rifle season by hunting district for elk security (Elk Security Area)				
Percentage/acres more than 1/2 mile from a designated open route during bow season by hunting district for elk security (Elk Security Area Index)	17.5%/ 197,234	13.0%/ 146,151	13.5%/152,149	24.8%/ 278,699
Percentage/acres of wildlife core security Area	52.8%/ 594,743	45.6%/ 513,258	43.7%/ 491,832	69.6%/ 784,109
Invasive Plants				
Measurement indicators:				
The number of trails designated as open to motorcycles and motorized vehicles 50 inches in width or less	18	31	58	1

Issue	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Miles of roads currently closed that are proposed for reopening	25.12	0	35.9	1.5
Motorized wheeled access for dispersed camping impacts soils, rare plants, and invasive plants				
Soils				
Measurement indicators:				
Acres of sensitive soils located within motorized wheeled access corridors for dispersed camping	15,554	17,187	18,244	5,130
Acres of soils with high erosion potential	6,421	6,753	7,050	1,942
Acres of ash cap soils	7,200	8,400	9,061	2,405
Acres of hydric soils	111	139	139	26

Issue	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Acres of landslide/slump prone soils	1,822	1,895	1,944	757
Rare Plants				
Number of motorized routes with rare plant species occurrences	126	139	148	45
Invasive Plants				
Acres of invasive plants infestations within motorized wheeled access corridors for dispersed camping	22,095	23,366	23,701	12,488

Total number of acres available for motorized access for dispersed camping within corridors along designated routes

Table 2- 25: Comparison of the Alternatives by Issues – Over-Snow

Issue	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Recreation				
Designating areas open to over-snow vehicles use impacts recreational experiences, roadless characteristics, and wilderness character				
Measurement Indicators:				
Acres of IRAs open to over-snow vehicle use	214,137	394,660	395,346	9,133
Acres of RWAs open to over-snow vehicle use	0	73,809	74,097	0
Acres of WSAs open to over-snow vehicle use	20,609	99,771	99,771	0
Total acres open to over-snow vehicle use	564,448	748,981	753,660	360,438
Wildlife				
Designation of over-snow vehicle use will impact wintering wildlife				
Measurement Indicators:				
<u>Percentage/acres of the Forest open to over-snow vehicle use</u>				
Seasonal	3.7% / 41,856	4.4% / 49,097	4.4% / 49,097	3.7% / 41,856
Year-round	50.1% / 564,448	66.4% / 748,981	66.9% / 753,660	32.0% / 360,438
<u>Percentage/acres of mountain goat winter range open to over-snow vehicle use</u>	21.3% / 14,500	49.0% / 33,381	49.7% / 33,839	8.4% / 5,713

Issue	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Percentage/acres of elk winter range open to over-snow vehicle use	69.5%/ 180,205	75.0%/ 194,549	75.6%/ 196,110	62.9%/ 163,179

2.7 CHANGES BETWEEN DRAFT EIS AND FINAL EIS

- Ø Minor grammatical edits were made to correct typographical errors and improve readability.
- Ø Section 2.2.1 (Public Participation): Updated to reflect activities which have occurred since Fall 2008, associated with the release of the FEIS.
- Ø Section 2.2.2 (Issues): Table 2.1: Deleted the word “may” from all issue indicators. Added the following issue: Motorized/mechanical transport use on roads and trails in the area recommended for wilderness designation (RWA) impacts its wilderness character, along with its associated measurement indicators
Table 2.1: Added the following measurement indicators: Acres of Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS), by setting and Miles of motorized routes within each ROS by Management Area to the following issue: The designation of motorized routes affects motorized and nonmotorized recreation opportunities by altering the amount, type, and season of motorized and nonmotorized routes
- Ø Table 2.1: Changed some of the measurement indicators for the following issues: Designation of motorized routes impacts water resources, fish and aquatic habitat, soils, and invasive plants.
Table 2.1: For the issue re: motorized access for dispersed camping, added the following indicators: Acres of sensitive soils located within motorized wheeled access corridors for dispersed camping (Soils); Number of motorized routes with rare plant species occurrences (Rare Plants); and Acres of invasive plants infestations within motorized wheeled access corridors for dispersed camping (Invasive Plants)
- Ø Table 2.2: Added noise as an issue not pertaining to summer motorized/mechanical transport use
- Ø Table 2.3: Added Acres of RWA open to over-snow vehicle use as an measurement indicator to the following issue: Designating areas open to winter travel may affect recreational experiences in response to comments on the DEIS
- Ø Table 2.4: Added noise as an issue not pertaining to over-snow vehicle use
- Ø Section 2.2.4 (Common to All Action Alternatives): Added a number of features and edited the section for clarity
- Ø Section 2.2.4 (Common to All Action Alternatives): Changed to apply to summer use
- Ø Section 2.2.4 (Common to All Action Alternatives): Changed the wording from “No motorized equipment or mechanical transport allowed in Designated Wilderness and Recommended Wilderness” to “Motorized equipment and mechanical transport would not be allowed in Designated Wilderness”
- Ø Section 2.2.4 (Common to All Action Alternatives): Changed the wording of one of the features from “No opportunities for high-challenge motorized opportunities (hill climbs, mud bogs, and play areas)” to “There would be no opportunities for high-challenge motorized opportunities (hill climbs, mud bogs, play areas, and motor parks)”
- Ø Section 2.2.4 (Common to All Action Alternatives): Added the following:
 - Ø “Unauthorized” routes which were created prior to the 2001 Tri-State Decision would no longer be open to motorized use unless designated on the motor vehicle use map (MVUM)”
 - Ø “Utility vehicles greater than 50 inches in width would be allowed on National Forest System roads open to full size vehicles”

- Ø “Utility vehicles less than 50 inches in width would be allowed on National Forest System double-track trails”
- Ø “Corridors for motorized wheeled access for dispersed camping would be extended to those sites identified on the maps of the alternatives”
- Ø “Motorized wheeled access between dispersed campsites would be prohibited”
- Ø “Access to dispersed campsites outside the designated corridors would be accessible only by nonmotorized means”
- Ø “Parking of motorized vehicles off of designated routes would be limited to 30 feet from the edge of the route surface”
- Ø Off-road travel for purposes other than dispersed camping would be limited to parking immediate adjacent to the designated route”
- Ø “Roads and trails closed to public motorized use would remain available to Forest Service personnel for administrative purposes including wildfire suppression, search and rescue, medical emergencies, permit administration, data collection, invasive plants treatments, general management , and other activities”
- Ø Section 2.2.5 (Common to All Action Alternatives – Over-Snow): deleted the following: “No snowmobile use until December 1, except on open roads to support current hunting season road closures and provide for a good hunting experience.” Deleted the following: “No snowmobile use in Designated and Recommended Wilderness” and replaced with the following “Snowmobile use in Designated Wilderness would not be allowed.”
- Ø Section 2.2.6 (Alternative 1 - Summer): added Table 2-5 for clarity
- Ø Section 2.2.7 (Alternative 1 – Over-Snow): moved over-snow effects under each alternative instead of showing it as a separate section; added Table 2-7 for clarity
- Ø Section 2.2.10 (Alternative 3 – Summer): added the following: “Motorized/mechanical transport use in recommended wilderness areas;”, added Table 2-13 for clarity
- Ø Section 2.2.11 (Alternative 3 – Over-Snow): added the following ”Motorized/mechanical transport use allowed in recommended wilderness areas,” added Table 2-13 for clarity
- Ø Section 2.2.12 (Alternative 4- Summer): added Table 2-15 for clarity
- Ø Section 2.2.13 (Alternative 4 – Over-Snow): added Table 2-17 for clarity
- Ø Section 2.3 (Project Design Features): Table 2-19: edited table to include additional objectives and design features in response to comments on the DEIS
- Ø Section 2.4 (Monitoring): edited to provided more detail in response to comments on the DEIS
- Ø Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered But Eliminated From Detailed Study): added Alternatives 2.5.13 – 2.5.27 in response to comments on the DEIS
- Ø Section 2.6.1 (Comparison of Alternatives by Activity): added Tables 2.20 and 2.22 to provide more detail